Feature Focus: Let's Celebrate!

American Farmhouse *Style*

Peek into Project House Austin and Utah

MERRY HOME TOURS

Easy Crafts, and Inviting Tables

+ Festive mantels & handy gift guides

See our Tree and Tablescape Contest Winners!

December 2024/January 2025
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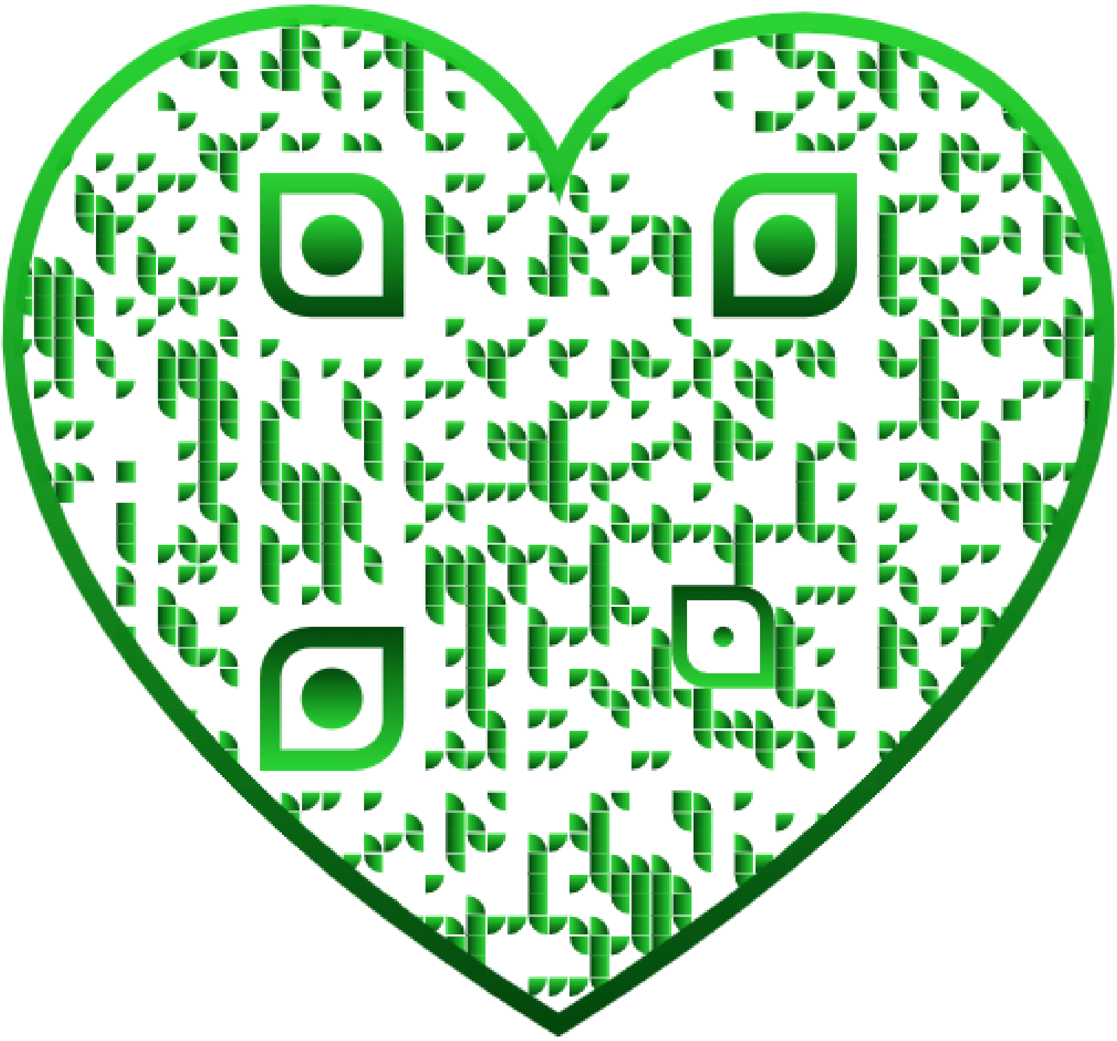

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Let's Celebrate!

We made it through another year! Let's take time to celebrate the season in every way: adorn the house and front door, bake a bunch of goodies, wrap your gifts in a memorable way, turn up the tunes and gather your loved ones around!

In this issue, we're celebrating the creativity and warmth of four thoughtful homeowners while we peek into their amazing abodes. We're also celebrating crafts with easy projects you can do yourself or with the little ones to create keepsakes along with the memories of making them together. We're also celebrating fresh and inviting tables and how easy they are to create.

Peek into both Project House Utah, which is just one issue away from the final reveal (page 98)! You won't believe how stunning it is—but in the meantime, enjoy the landscape design in this issue. While Project House Austin is just breaking ground, come see how the pantry and guest bath are going to look (page 108)!

We are delighted to show off our Christmas Tree Contest winner (page 6) and our Tablescape Contest winner, too (page 86). They won the votes and hearts of our farmhouse community, and you'll see why when reading their features.

And finally, we lovingly say farewell to our amazing 2024 Brand Ambassador Stephanie Leleux (page 28). We could not ask for a more multi-talented lady who represented us with such warmth, oodles of unique ideas and so much enthusiasm for all the things that make a house a wonderful home. We won't be letting her go so easily though—watch for more of her projects in future issues. Watch for the exciting announcement of our 2025 Brand Ambassador in our next issue!

As always, we are so grateful for your readership and wish you every blessing this holiday season!

Warmly,

Kelly McMaster

Kelly McMaster, *Editor*

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CONTENTS

Made in America

8 Keeping the Legacy
This company brings together craftsmanship and style to create quality cotton and wool pieces.

Barn Finds

10 Home for the Holidays
Add some festive sparkle to your home with these cozy and charming finds.

Flea Markets Finds

24 Very Merry Vintage Vignettes
Gather a few tips for creating special holiday moments in your home.

Brand Ambassador

28 Warm Up Your Holidays: Creating the Perfect Hot Cocoa Bar
There's no better way to embrace the festive spirit of the holiday season than with a cozy, inviting hot cocoa bar!

Project House Utah

98 Outdoor Living
See how the landscaping and hardscaping connect the interior and exterior design of our Project House Utah.

Project House Austin

108 Timeless Charm
The pantry and guest bathroom of our Project House Austin shine with texture and a touch of European style.

Bookshelf

102 *Beautiful Living*
Find confidence in your interior design skills.

Small Features

14 Festive Farmhouse Marketplace
Find perfectly thoughtful gifts for just about anyone on your list!

6 Our 2024 Tree Contest Winner
After a nationwide call and voting, this gem won your hearts and the title of winner!

16 An Elegant Celebration
The details make the design in this stunning holiday home.

20 A Marvelous Mantel
Multiple layers of vintage goodness make a stunning mantel.

70 A Classic Christmas
A traditional style home decks the halls with ribbons, holly and pine sprigs.

86 A Winning, Festive Tablescape
After an open call and voting, see how this stylist won the Tablescape Contest title!

90 DIY Your Décor
These projects are both fun and festive—the perfect addition to any space in your holiday home!

House Tours

34 To Grandmother's House We Go
How one young couple honors bygone times.

46 Rustically Elegant
Styling your home with a rustic yet modern elegance this Christmas.

58 Decorating with Care
An old-time Christmas feel comes to the North Carolina home of our former Brand Ambassador.

74 A Magical Hygge Holiday
A couple's dream home comes alive as they celebrate their first Christmas.

Extra

Editor's Letter 3
On the Web 101
Sources 112
Roundup 114

ON THE COVER
Photography by Jessica Sigmon
Cover design by Gabby Oh

First interior page photography by Stephanie Leleux

Feature Focus: Let's Celebrate!....16
Merry Home Tours, Easy Crafts, and Inviting Tables....34, 46, 58, 74, 86, 90, 102
Festive mantels & handy gift guides....20, 10
See our Tree and Tablescape Contest Winners!....6, 86
Peek into Project House Austin and Utah....98, 108

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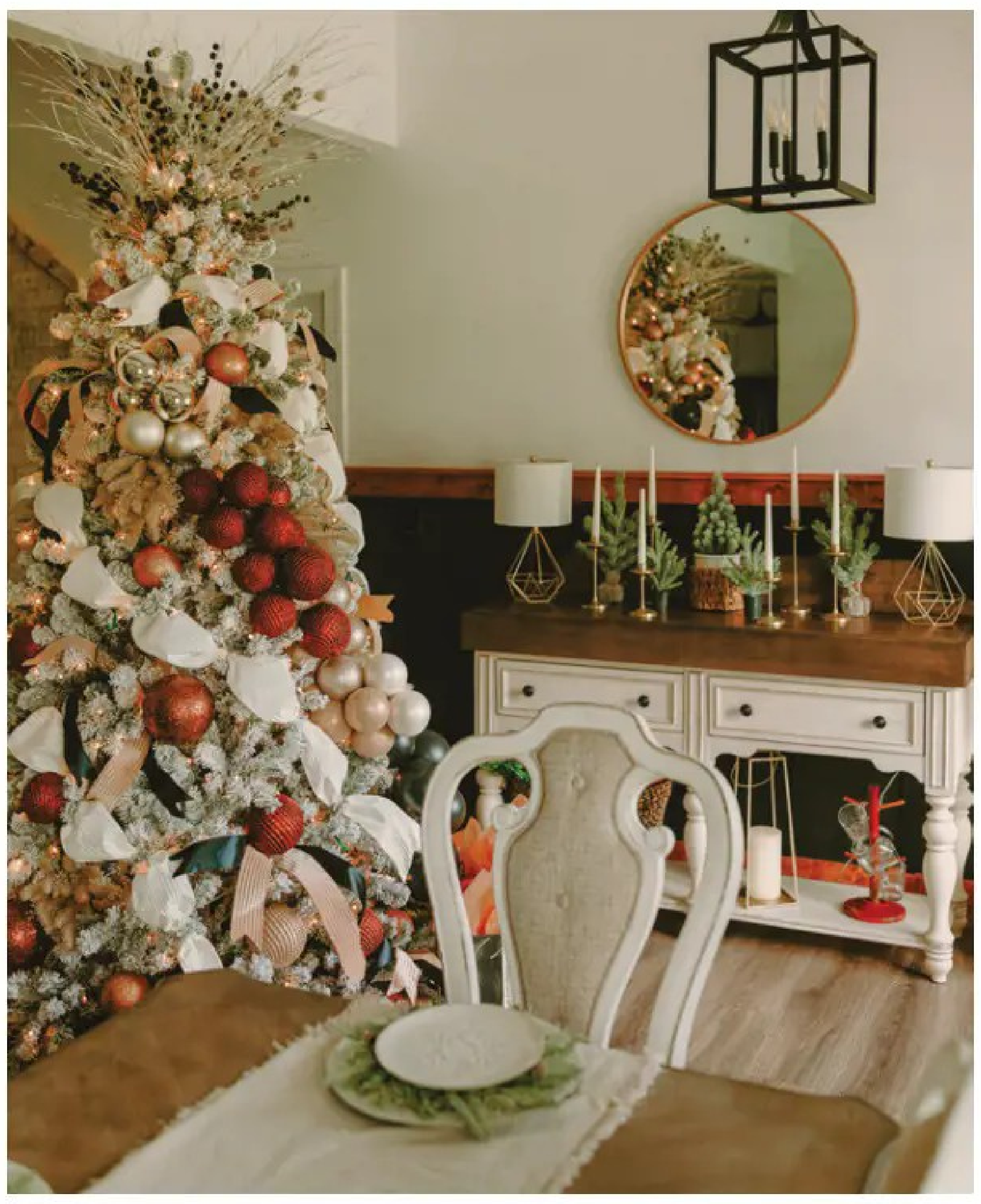
MERRY
Christmas

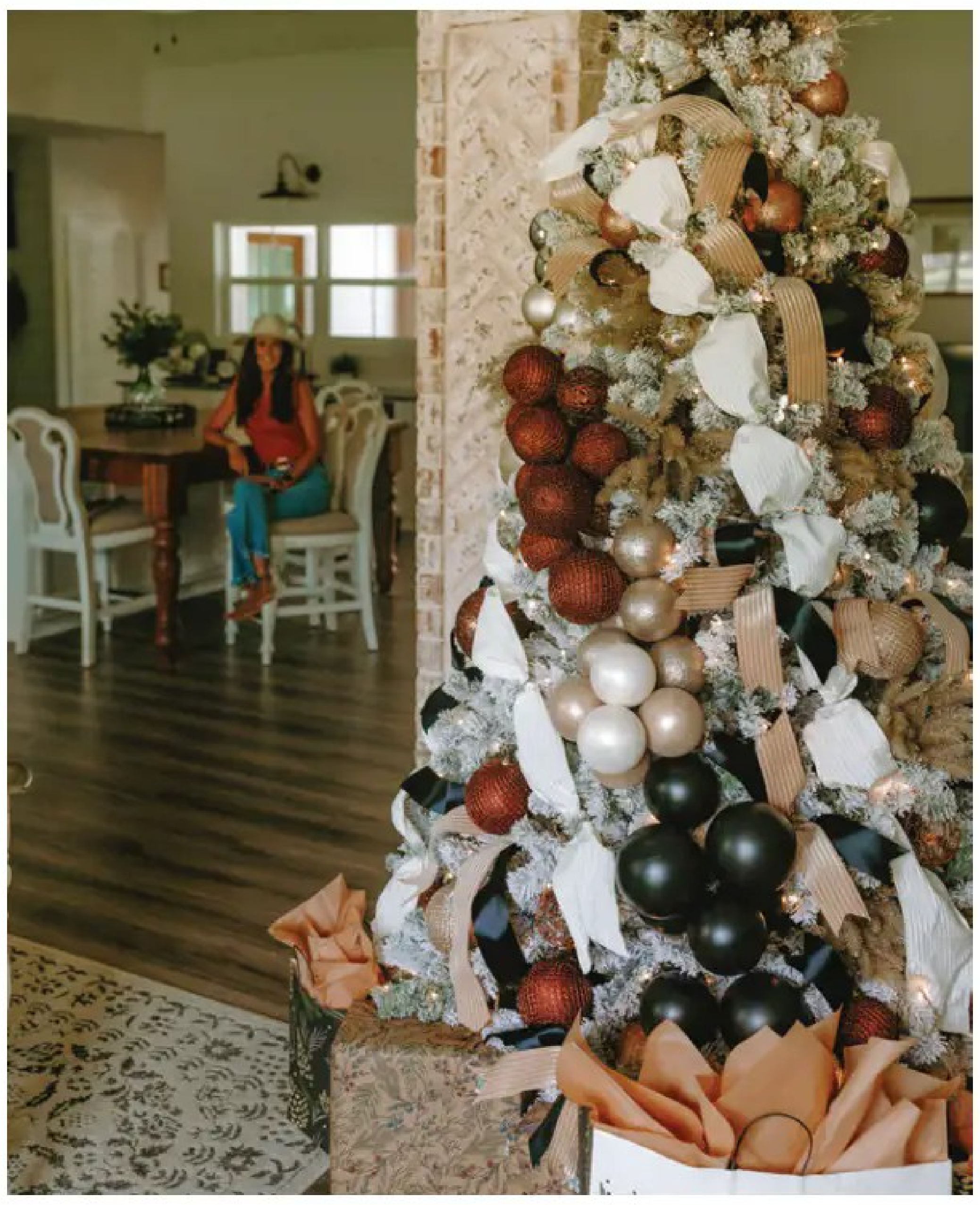
To see more of Michelle's home, visit her on Instagram **@modernfarmfam**.

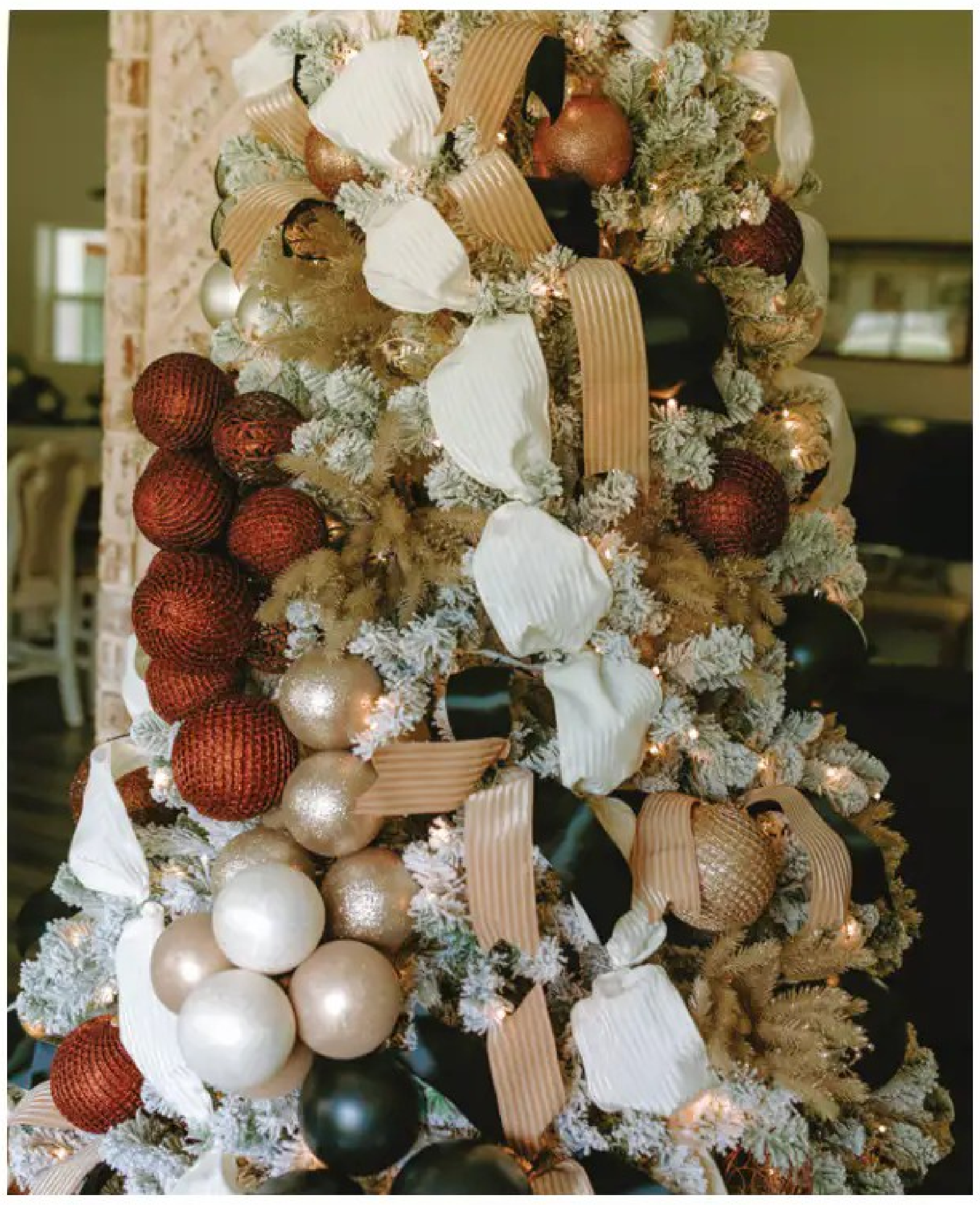
Our 2024 Tree Contest Winner

After a nationwide open call and voting by our farmhouse community, this sparkling gem won your hearts and the title of winner!

Produced by **Kelly McMaster** | Styled by **Michelle Volk** | Photographed by **Hannah Langford Photography**







Michelle Volk works by day as a mortgage loan originator (a 36-year veteran of the industry), but on weekends and evenings she is a busy mom, wife and operates Styling, Staging and Grazing with a partner in Georgia. They decorate seasonal homes as well as plan and set up grazing tables for their clients. Sharing her many creative activities on @modernfarmfam on Instagram, there is never a dull moment.

We asked Michelle about her winning tree and what process she followed to create it:

AFS: *What sparked your idea for your theme/tree décor?*

Michelle: I change my décor every year kind of based on what's trending in the home décor world. I always keep it a basic neutral palette and then add some sparkle!

AFS: *Do you have any tips for the order in which you add things to the tree?*

Michelle: Starting with my blank canvas (the tree), I have used ribbon in the past to fill gaps or open spaces. I then move to the tree topper, which I change every year as well. I used lots of floral picks/stems based on my current color scheme. I then revisit the branches for fluffing and make decisions on where ornaments should be placed. It is all in the eye of the beholder really. I carefully space out a variety of ornaments and place them all over every branch of the tree. I always must go back and move a few around, of course.

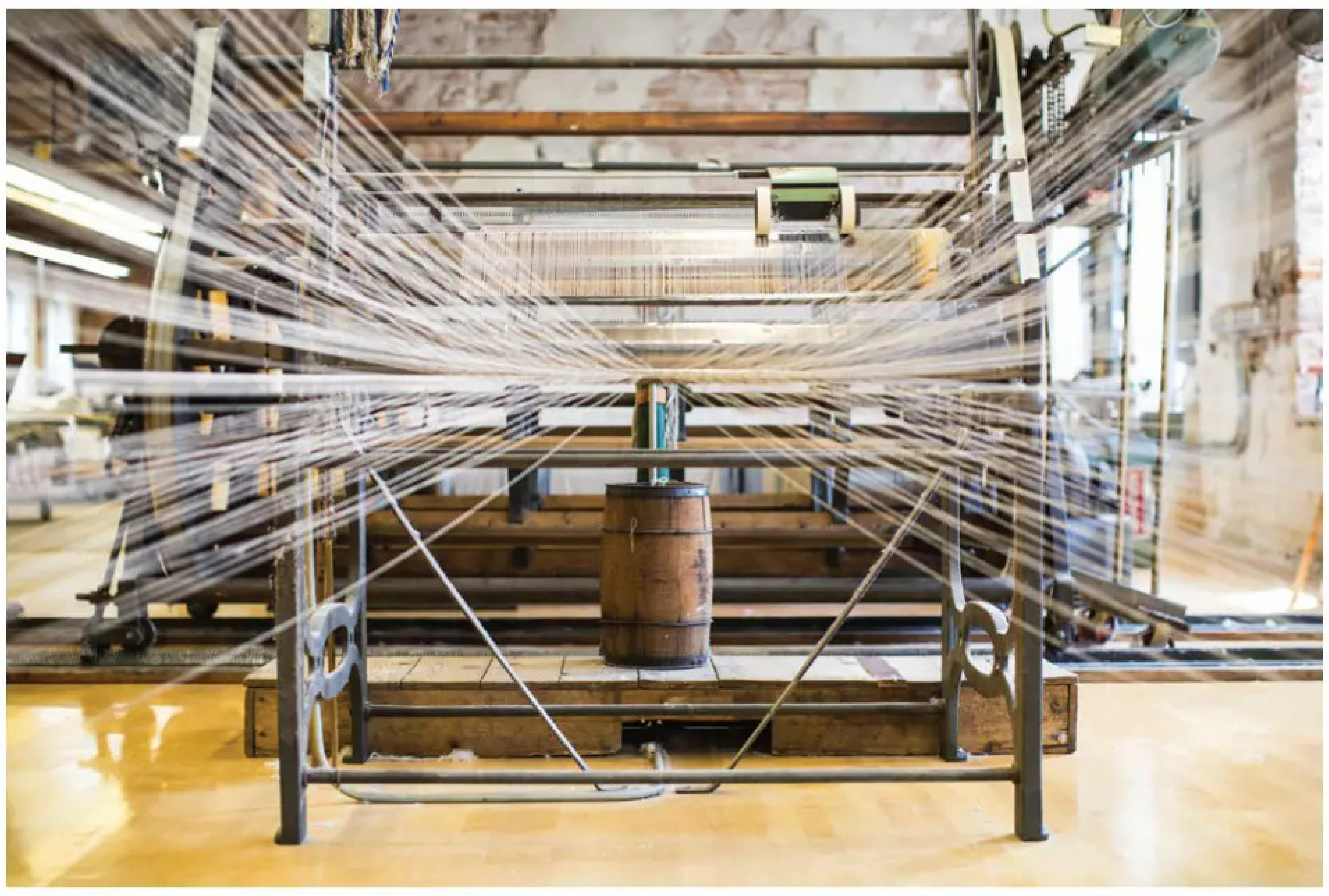
AFS: *Where you find your best neutral/farmhouse décor?*

Michelle: I really begin my search for neutral décor right after one Christmas is over. I look for sales on items I might not have budgeted for previously. I try to always shop locally, too. It means so much to support small businesses, and items are always more unique.

AFS: *When do you start decorating your tree and when do you take it all down?*

Michelle: I basically dig my holiday décor out on Halloween night....not even kidding! Since I'm also a Home Decorator and I am booked for the entire season, I need to plan ahead and be prepared to make my own home holiday ready before I dive into my clients' homes. I leave my décor up until December 26th and no later. Once I am done, I am done! (ha-ha)

My family is very supportive and goes along with whatever I am doing around the house. I have a son who is 26 years old and a bonus daughter that is 18 years old. My son is getting married in January, and we are all very excited. We have one small Yorkie named Princess and, in all honesty, she is the queen of our home!



KEEPING THE Legacy

Written by **Laura Shimko**
Photos Courtesy of **Amana Woolen Mill**

This American company brings together timeless craftsmanship and a cozy yet elevated style to create quality cotton and wool pieces for your home.

With both cotton and wool blankets, as well as accessories like scarves, aprons, bags and more, Amana Woolen Mill is a tiny but mighty heritage textile mill that embodies the skill, quality and ideals of a truly American company.

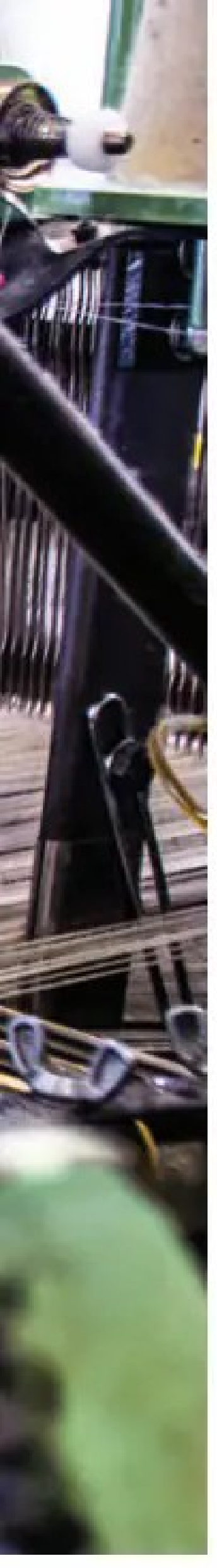
HEART AND HERITAGE

With more than 160 years of operating out of their original weaving building, Amana is passionate about preserving the best of American textile manufacturing and the heritage of impacting the local community, and country, for good. Textiles played an essential role in the success of America, and the small town of Amana was known across the country for its superior woolens. Today, it is the only remaining heritage textile mill in Iowa, run by a small group of artisans committed to quality products.

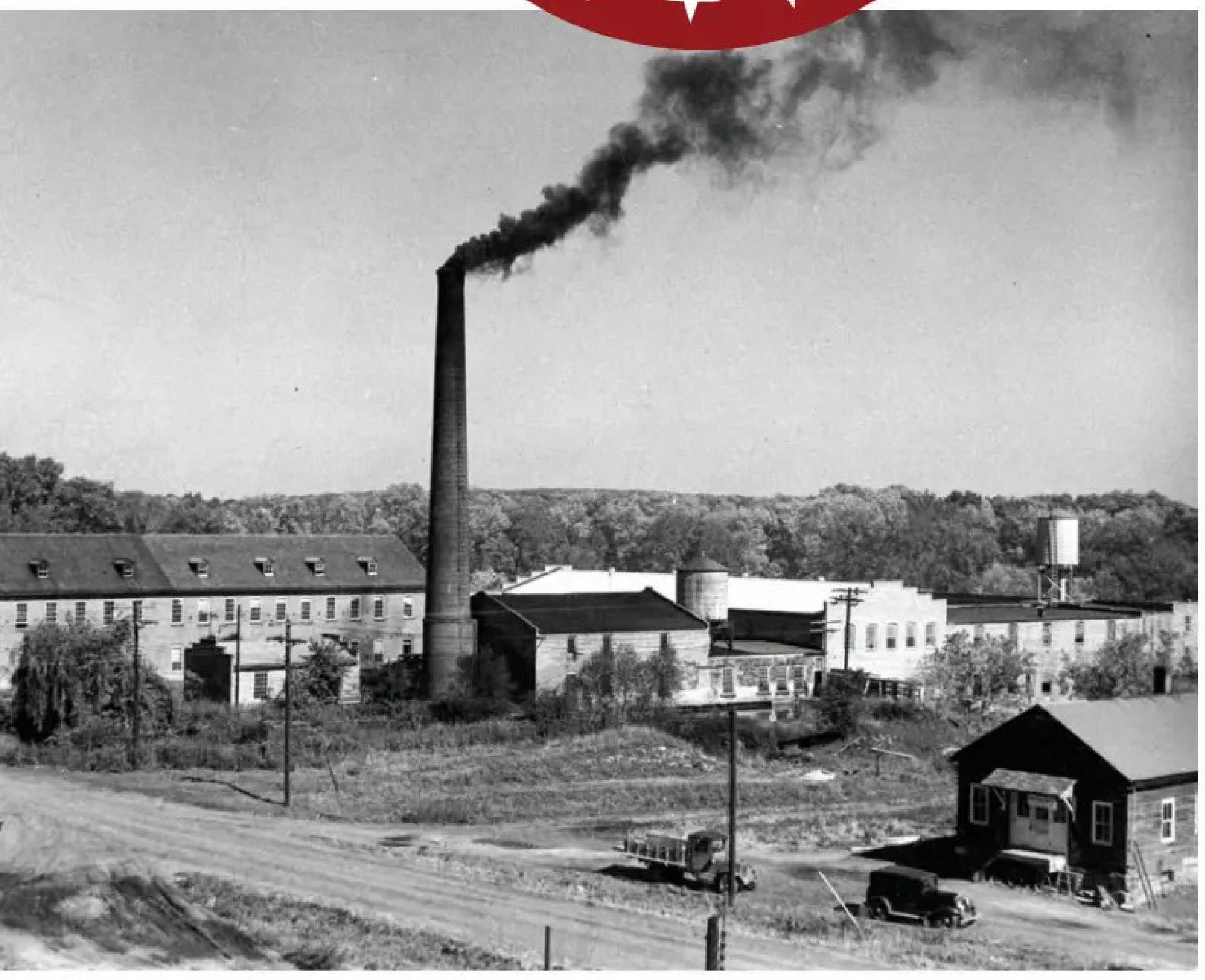
Designed, woven and hand finished in house, Amana textiles are carefully created by a crew of around five craftspeople. While there are three looms, all endearingly named, there is only one weaver who runs them—something that sets Amana apart in the industry. Each blanket is touched by less than three artisans, creating an intimate and personalized feel.

QUALITY AND COMFORT

In keeping with the Made in America brand, Amana sources all of its yarn in the USA, mainly in the Carolinas, and selects only recycled eco-friendly yarn, or 100% cotton yarn, wool, or Merino wool. Using natural fibers means harnessing the best features of natural wool and cotton to create quality products that are versatile and able to stand up against daily wear and tear.



Made in AMERICA



If you're looking for a product that is durable, strong and requires less washing, wool is a fantastic option. Both Amana's regular and Merino wool are soft, but Merino is the better choice for those wanting a more luxurious experience. Amana's wool provides cozy warmth without overheating, and minimal upkeep. While wool products are pricier than cotton, they are a great investment as they withstand years of use. They are also naturally fire resistant with their water and nitrogen rich fibers.

Amana's line of cotton products is the perfect option for those seeking a more breathable alternative to wool. Even softer than wool, Amana's cotton blankets and accessories require more cleaning, but are much easier to wash and dry. Their cotton throws come in a variety of colors and patterns that offer a cozy, stylish touch to any space in your home.

1/

DAYS
UNTIL
Christmas

2/

Add some festive sparkle to your home with these cozy and charming finds.

Home for the Holidays

Written by **Laura Shimko**

1. **Christmas Countdown Oval Slate Décor,** $31.11, Riverbend Home, riverbendhome.com
2. **Real Touch Pine Garland,** $36.00, Antique Farm House, antiquefarmhouse.com
3. **Red Twilight Wool Throw Blanket,** $170.00, Amana Woolen Mill, amanawoolenmill.com
4. **24" Red Berry Wreath,** $84.00, Riverbend Home, riverbendhome.com

AMANA
WOOLEN MILL

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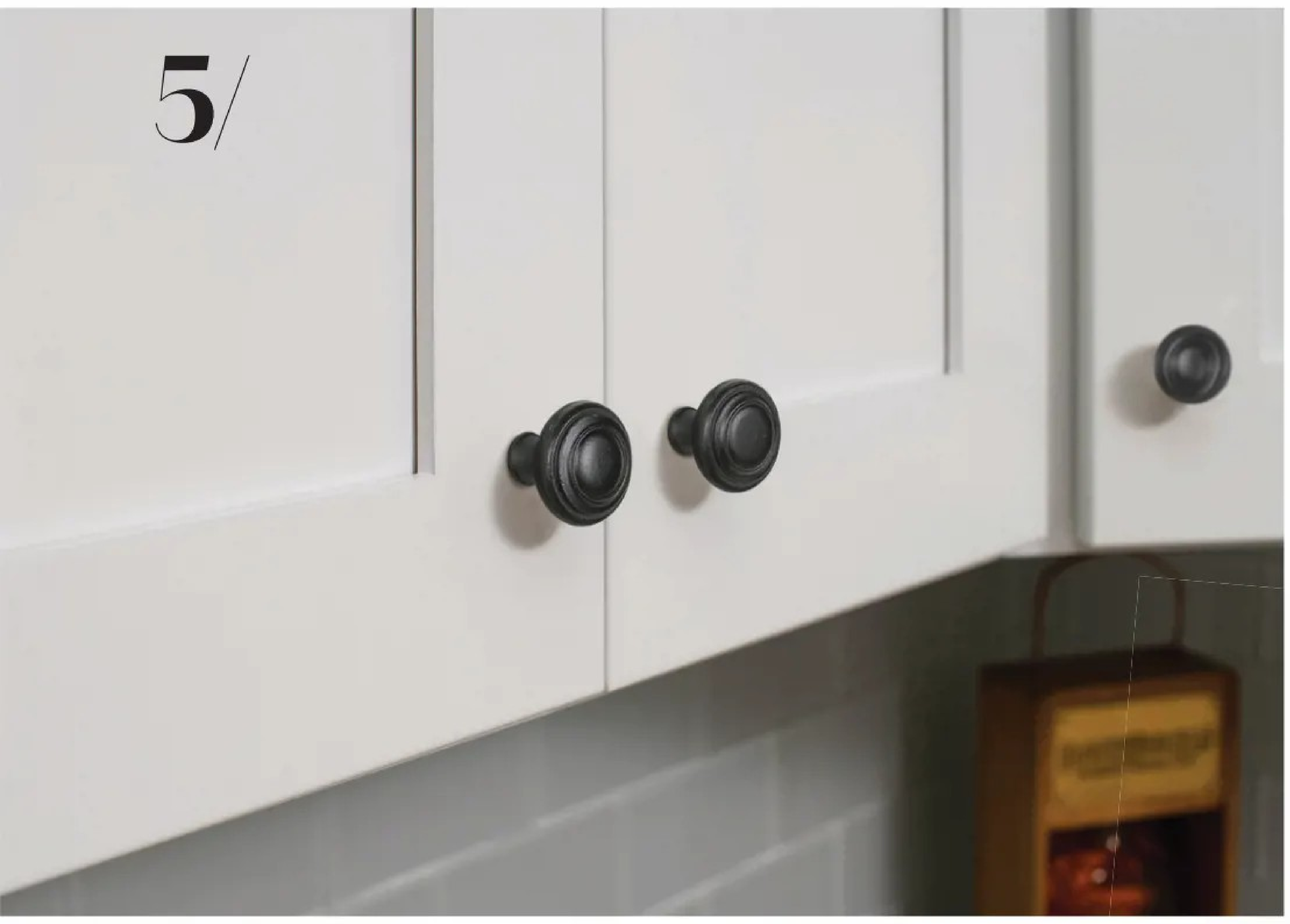

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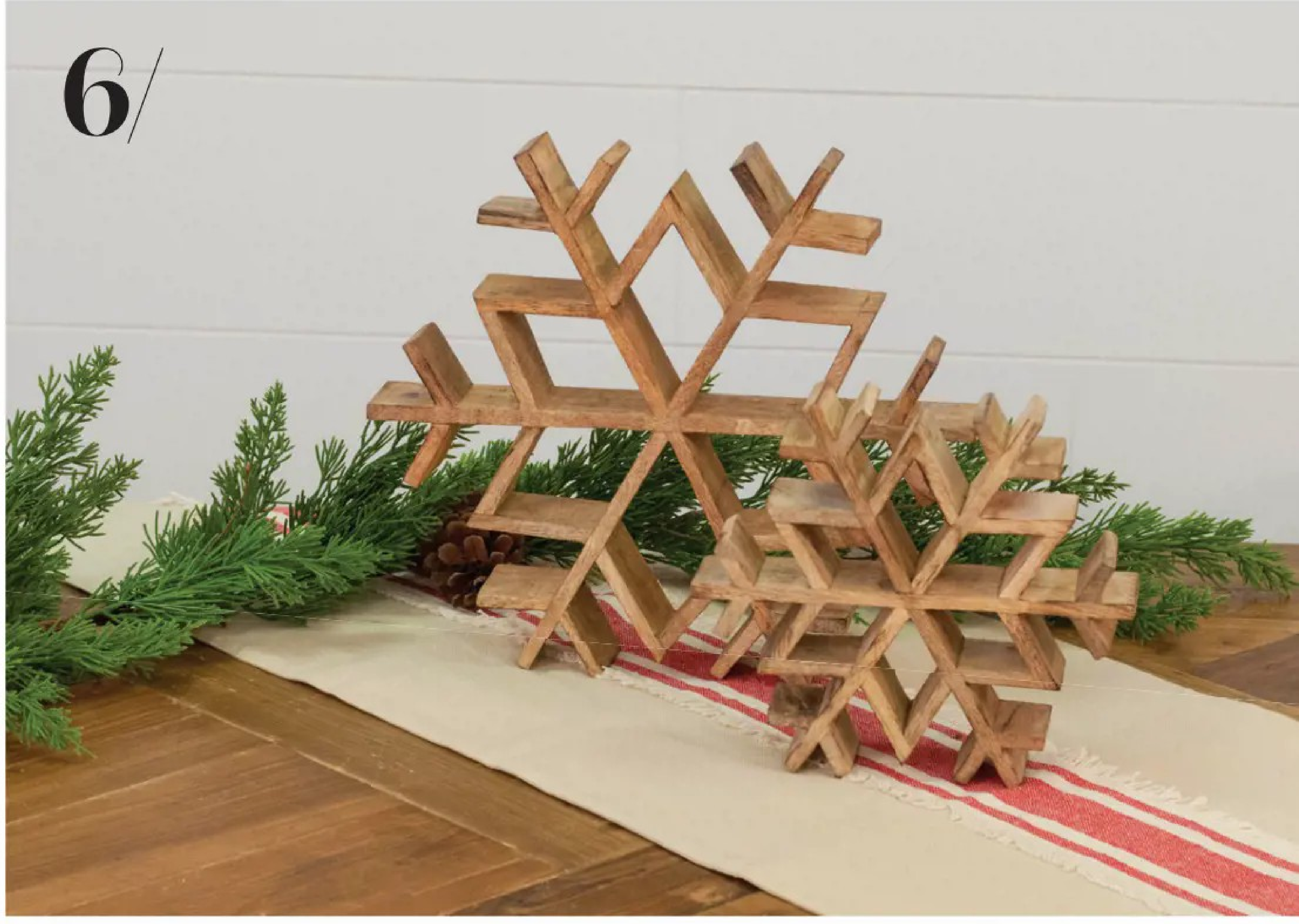

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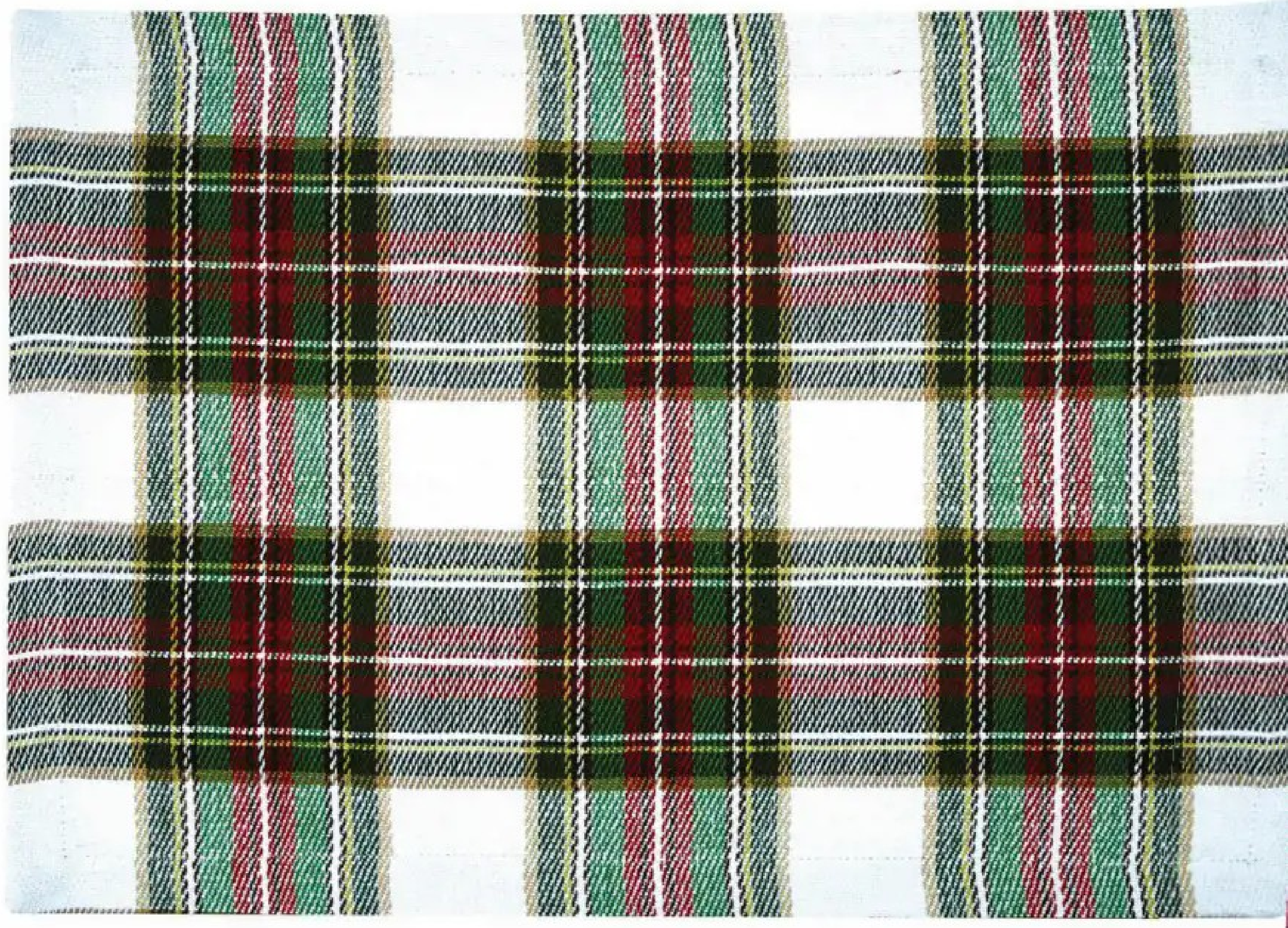

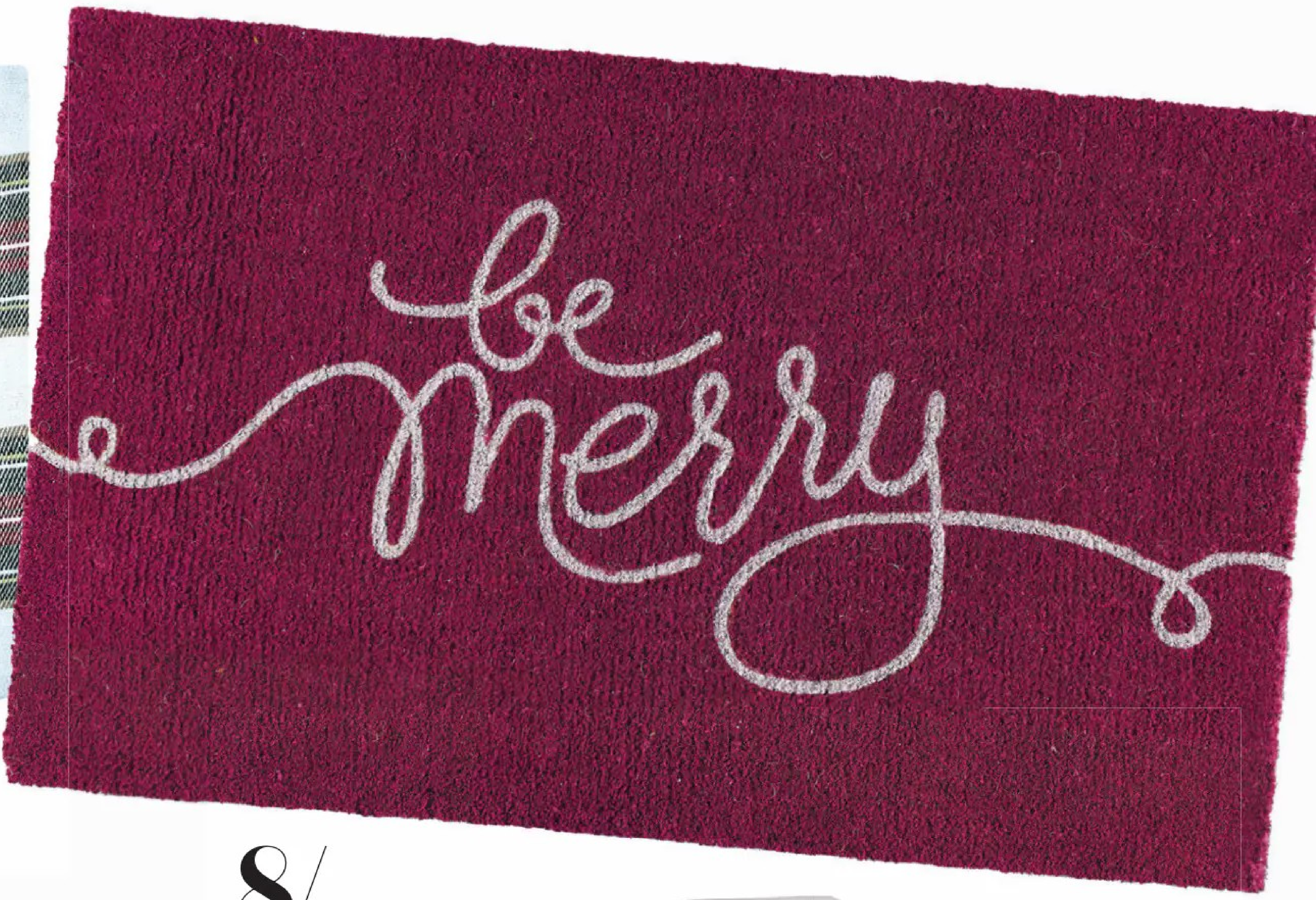

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5. **Turret Cabinet Knob,** $10.46, Ageless Iron Hardware, agelessironhardware.com
6. **Wooden Snowflake – 12",** $29.99, Piper Classics, piperclassics.com
7. **Balsam Berry Placemat,** $7.99, Piper Classics, piperclassics.com
8. **Be Merry Coir Door Mat,** $99.50, Grandin Road, grandinroad.com
9. **Nutcracker Monogrammed Dinner Napkin,** $25.00, Mrs. Evans Place, mrsevansplace.com
10. **Nest Bowl,** $250.00, Regina Andrew, reginaandrew.com

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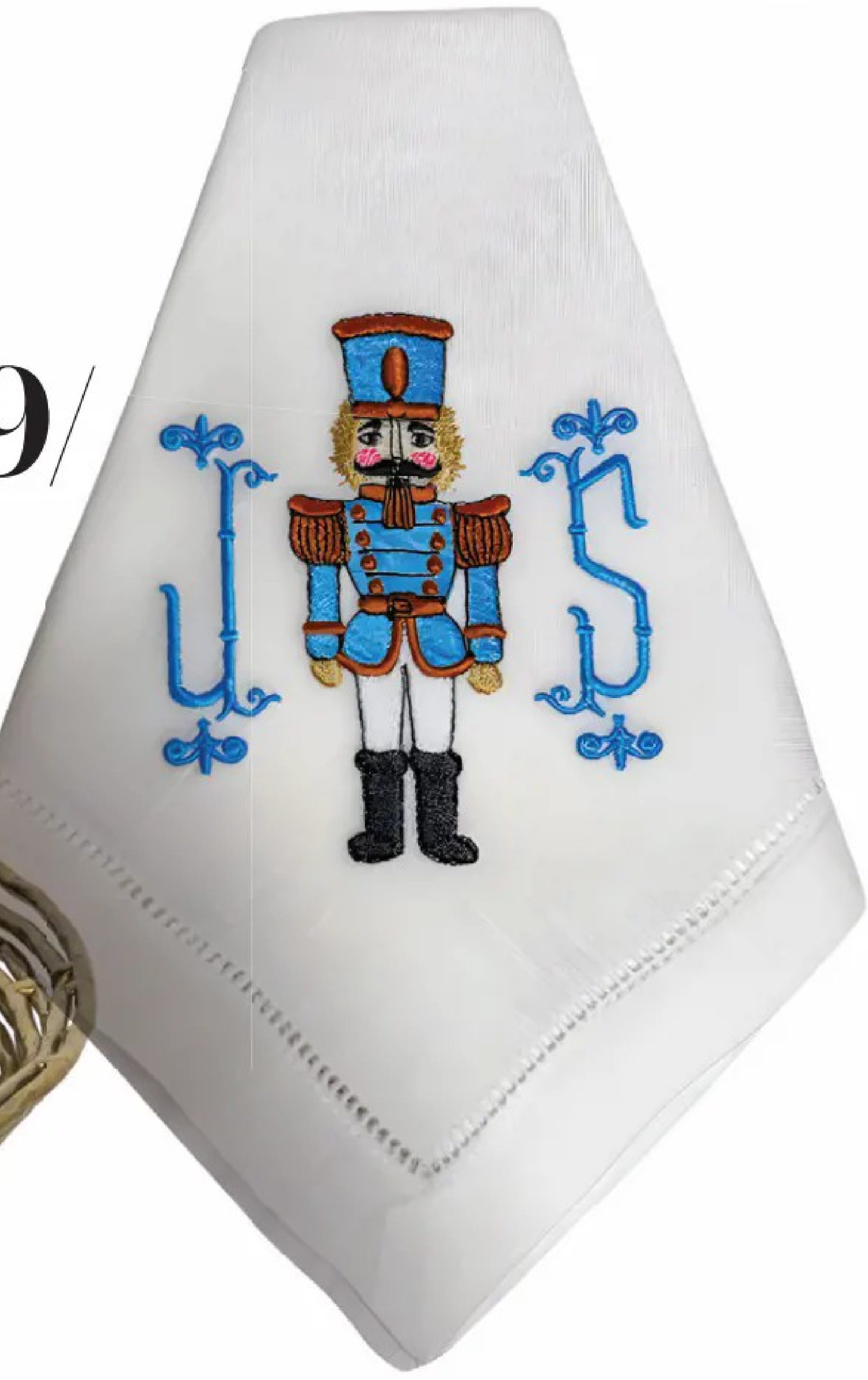

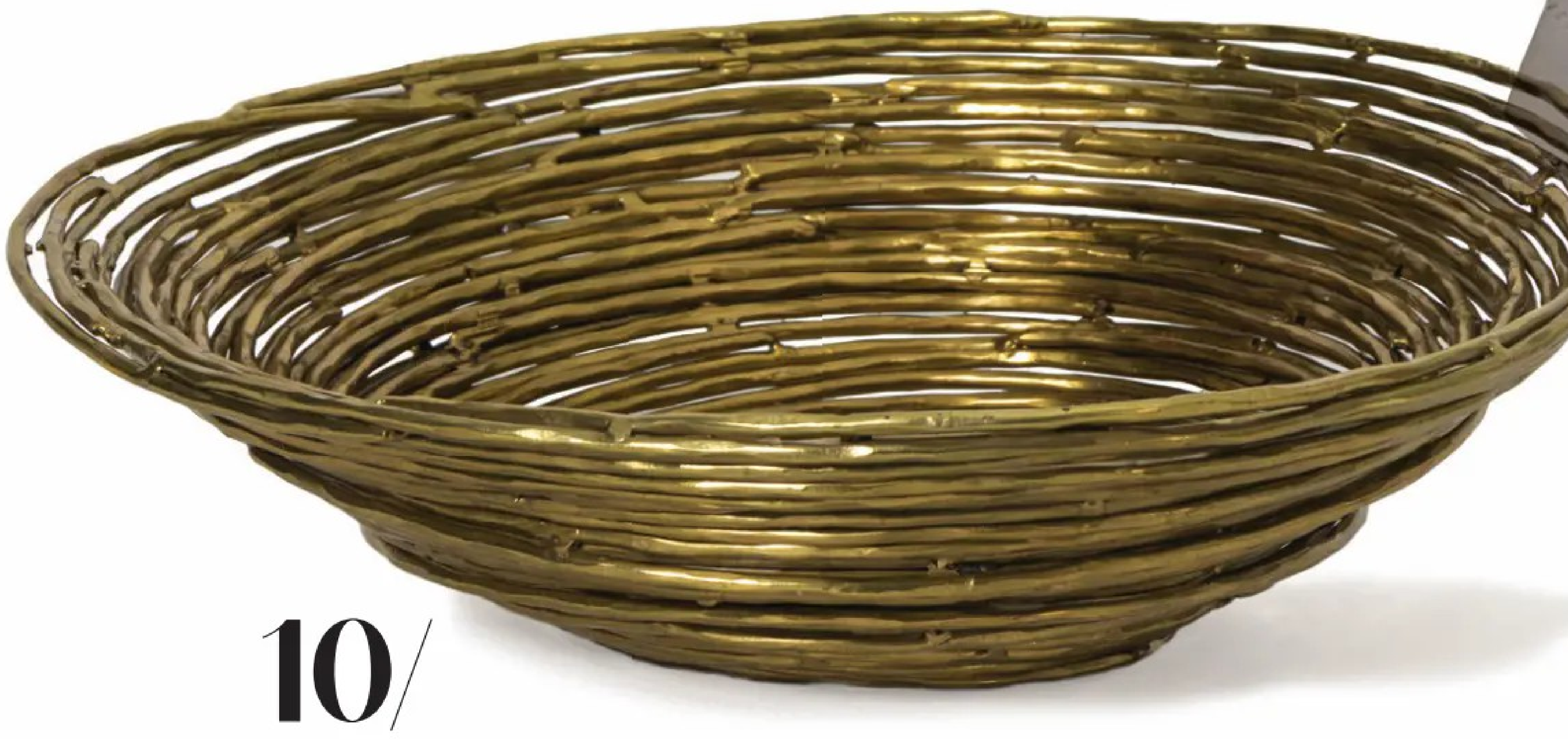

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Editor's
Choice
HOSELINK

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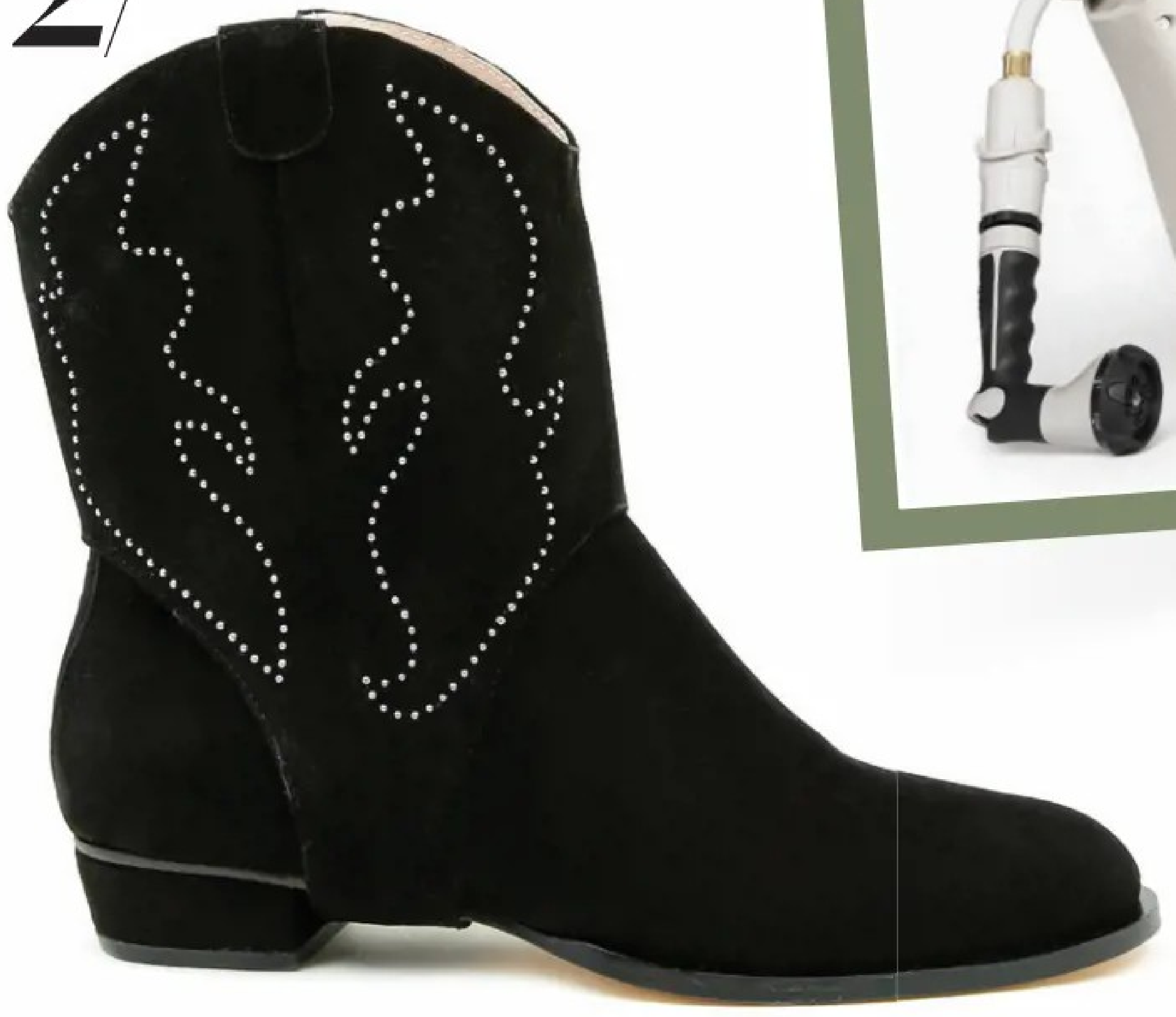

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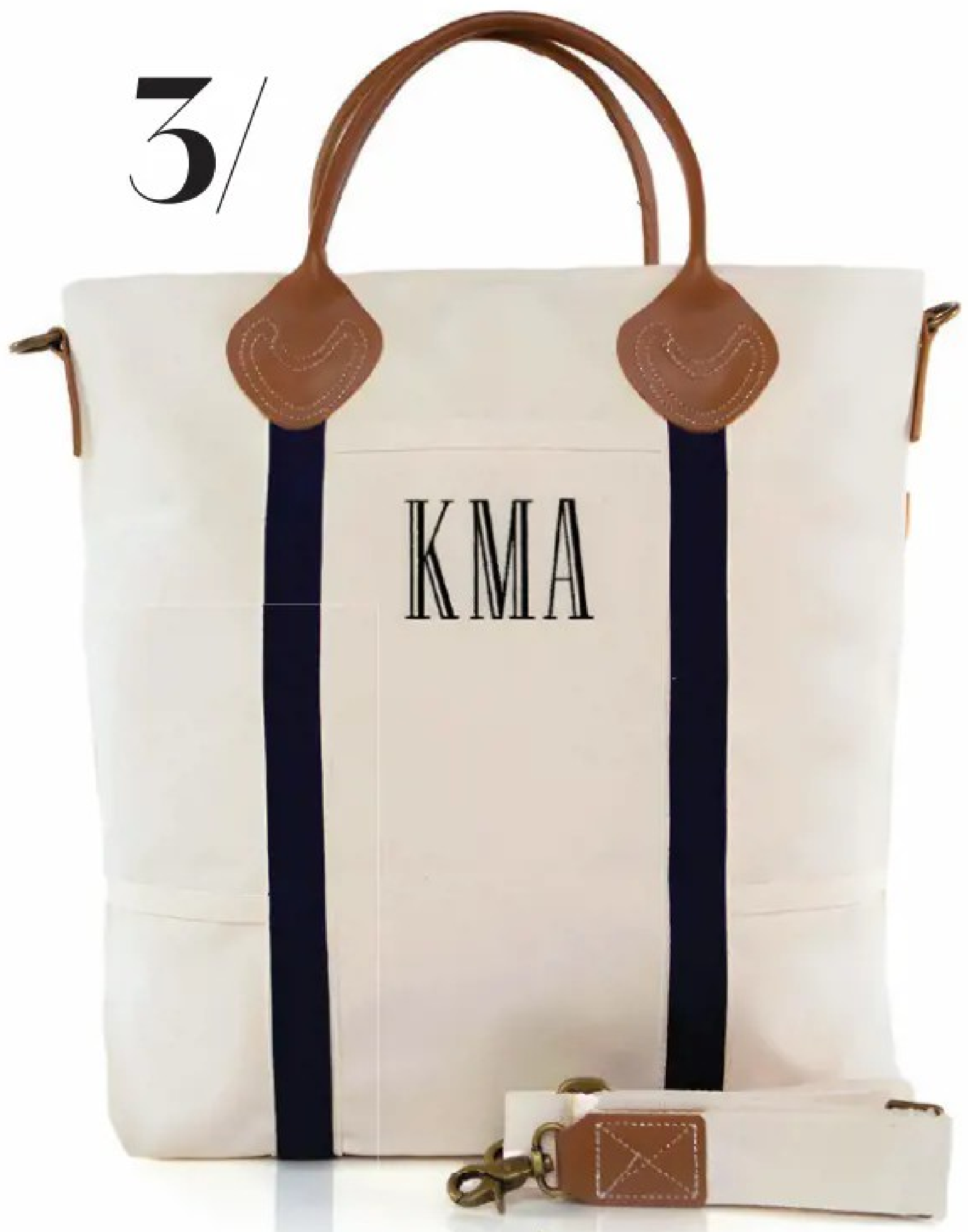

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5/

holiday herbs
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1. **82ft Retractable Hose Reel,** $249.00, Hoselink, 833.216.4673 or hoselink.com
2. **Black Suede Chelsea Boot + Oakley Strap,** $480.00, Alterre, alterreny.com
3. **Monogrammed Flight Bag,** $90.00, Mrs. Evans Place, mrsevansplace.com
4. **Leather Care Kit for Leather Goods & Furniture,** $43.99, Leather Honey, leatherhoney.com
5. **Holiday Herbs Rosemary & Sage Windowsill Grow Kit,** $16.00, Buzzy Seeds, buzzyseeds.com

Under the Tree

Add some cheer for everyone on your list this year with these fun gift ideas.

6/

7/

6. **Electric Gooseneck Digital Kettle 0.8L,** $99.99, Sipping Streams Tea Company, sippingstreams.com

7. **Cardinal Tea Set includes the porcelain teapot,** 2 mugs, and 2 dessert plates in matching gift boxes with 3 candy cane scones, $125.00, Erika's Tea Room, erikastearoom.com

8. **Board and Bow Set – Grey,** $175.00, Urban Natural, urbannatural.com

9. **Wildflowers Meditative Art Paint by Number Kit,** $35.00, Breathe People, breathepeople.com

10. **Name Art Print,** $29.00, Name Stories, namestories.com

11. ***Bored in the USA* – Travel Guide Book,** $15.00, Brass Monkey, brassmonkeygoods.com

12. **Cornflower Twilight Wool Throw Blanket,** $170.00, Amana Woolen Mill, amanawoolenmill.com

13. **Rob Roy Cotton Scarf,** $50.00, Amana Woolen Mill, amanawoolenmill.com

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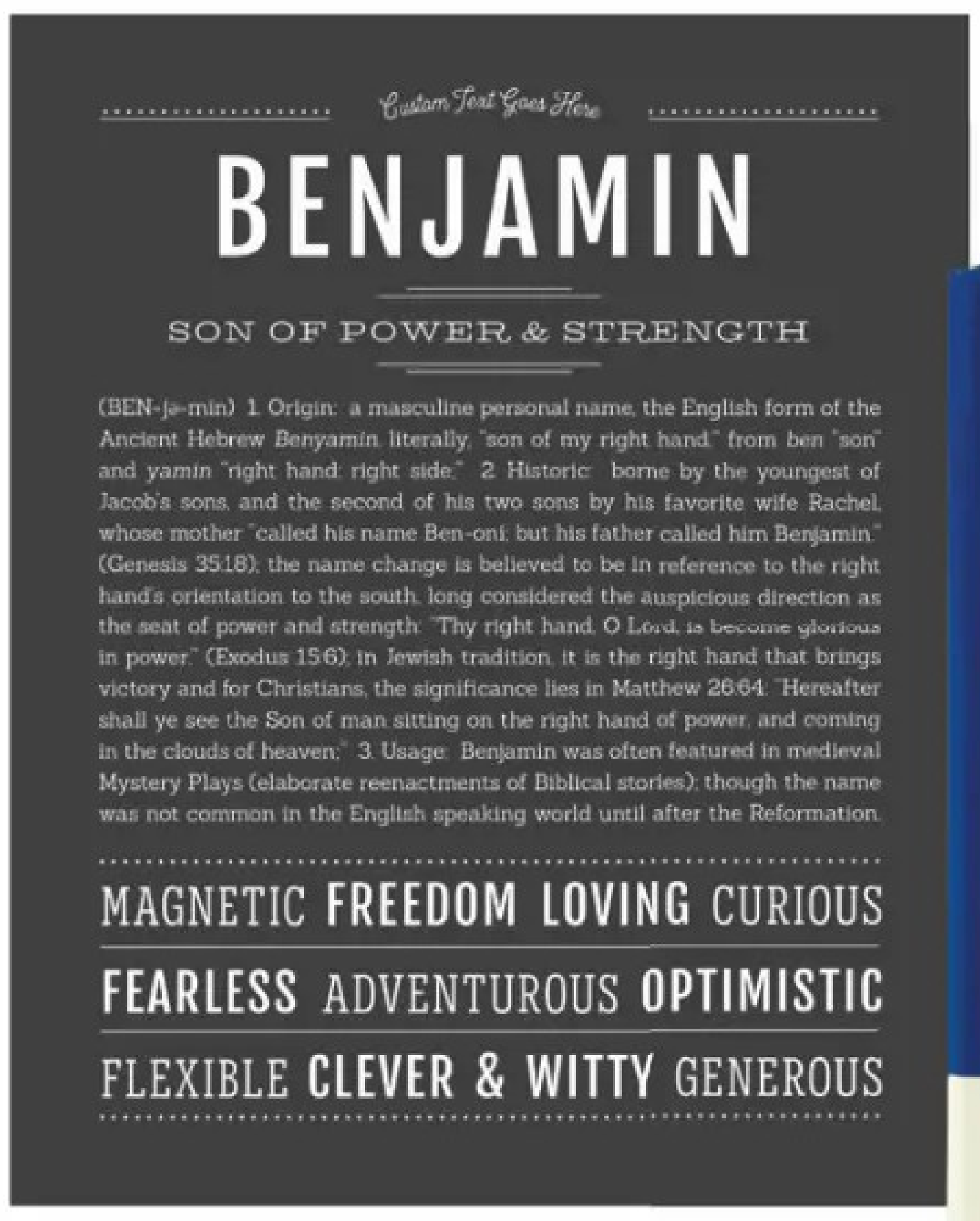

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BENJAMIN

SON OF POWER & STRENGTH

(BEN-ja-min) 1. Origin: a masculine personal name, the English form of the Ancient Hebrew *Benyamin*, literally, "son of my right hand," from *ben* "son" and *yamin* "right hand; right side." 2. Historic: borne by the youngest of Jacob's sons, and the second of his two sons by his favorite wife Rachel, whose mother "called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin" (Genesis 35:18); the name change is believed to be in reference to the right hand's orientation to the south, long considered the auspicious direction as the seat of power and strength: "Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power" (Exodus 15:6); in Jewish tradition, it is the right hand that brings victory and for Christians, the significance lies in Matthew 26:64: "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." 3. Usage: Benjamin was often featured in medieval Mystery Plays (elaborate reenactments of Biblical stories); though the name was not common in the English speaking world until after the Reformation.

MAGNETIC **FREEDOM LOVING** CURIOUS
FEARLESS ADVENTUROUS **OPTIMISTIC**
FLEXIBLE **CLEVER & WITTY** GENEROUS

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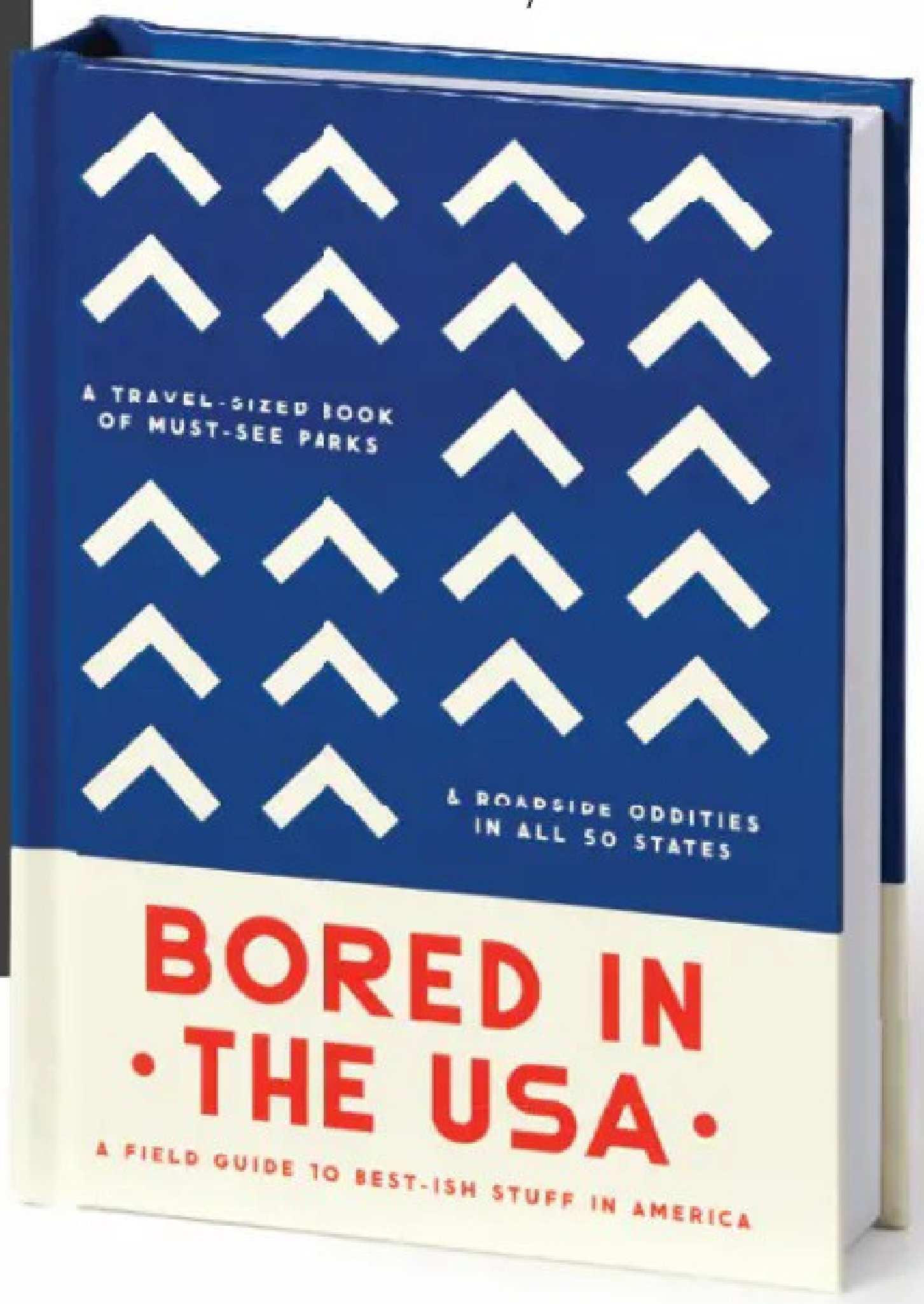

A TRAVEL-SIZED BOOK OF MUST-SEE PARKS
& ROADSIDE ODDITIES IN ALL 50 STATES
BORED IN ·THE USA·
A FIELD GUIDE TO BEST-ISH STUFF IN AMERICA

13/

AMANA
WOOLEN MILL

12/

Festive Farmhouse

Perfectly thoughtful gifts for just about anyone on your list!

By **Kelly McMaster**

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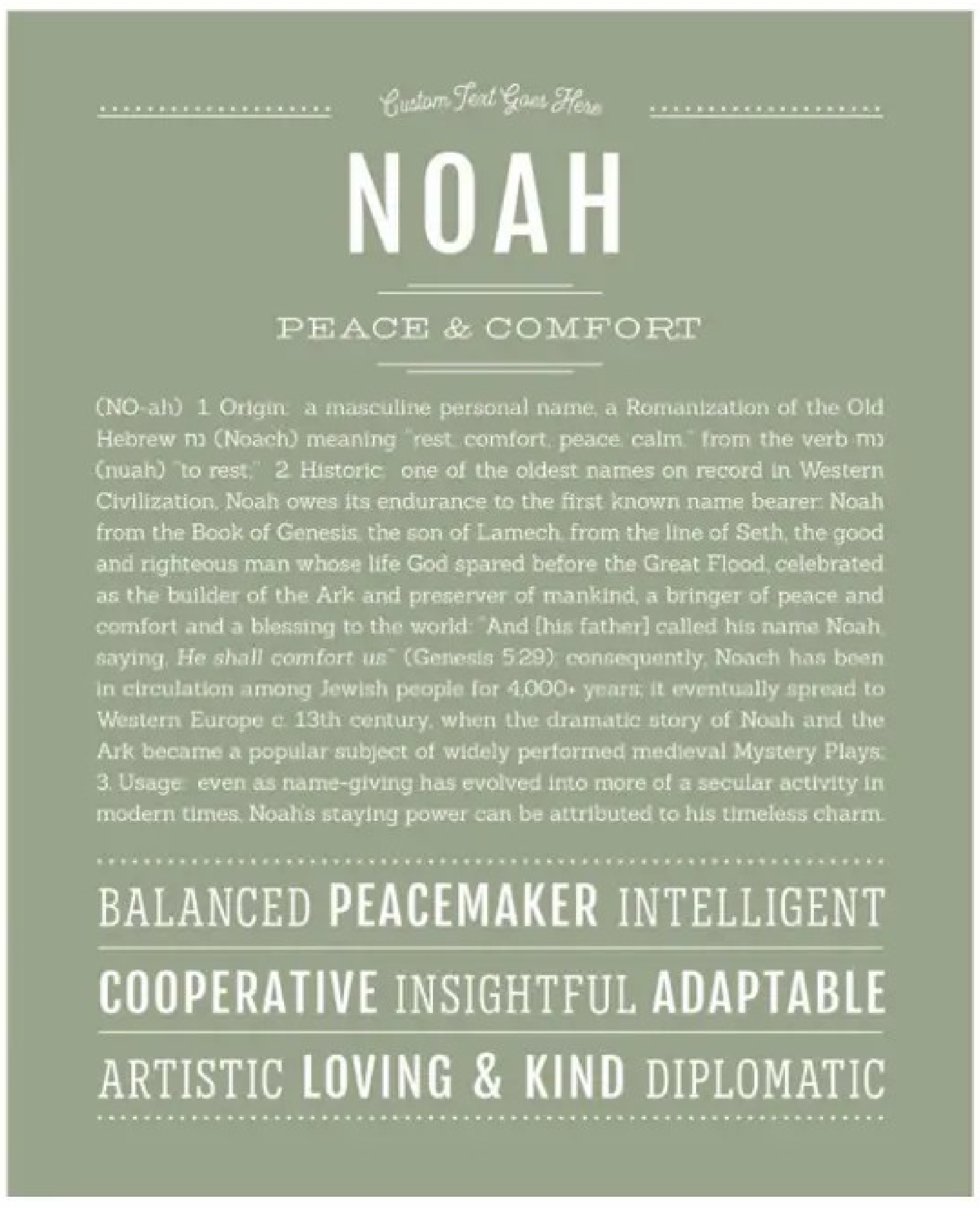
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The Fairchild Family
Happy Holidays

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An Elegant Celebration

The details make the design in this stunning holiday home.

Produced by **Kelly McMaster**
Design by **Katharine Rhudy of Reed & Acanthus Interior Design**
Photographed by **Laura Steff**

Holiday entertaining was the inspiration behind this gorgeous tablescape, but rather than traditional Christmas green and red, the nature-inspired interior color palette of blues, creams and greens called for something sophisticated but a little less conventional. Katharine Rhudy, of Reed and Acanthus Interior Design in New Orleans, used wired taffeta ribbon in robin's egg blue and gold from a local nursery as the starting point for this Christmas décor, evoking the elegance and luxury of the winter season. Fresh greenery with hints of gold leaves, berries and balls throughout create warmth and a timeless sense of opulence associated with the holiday season.

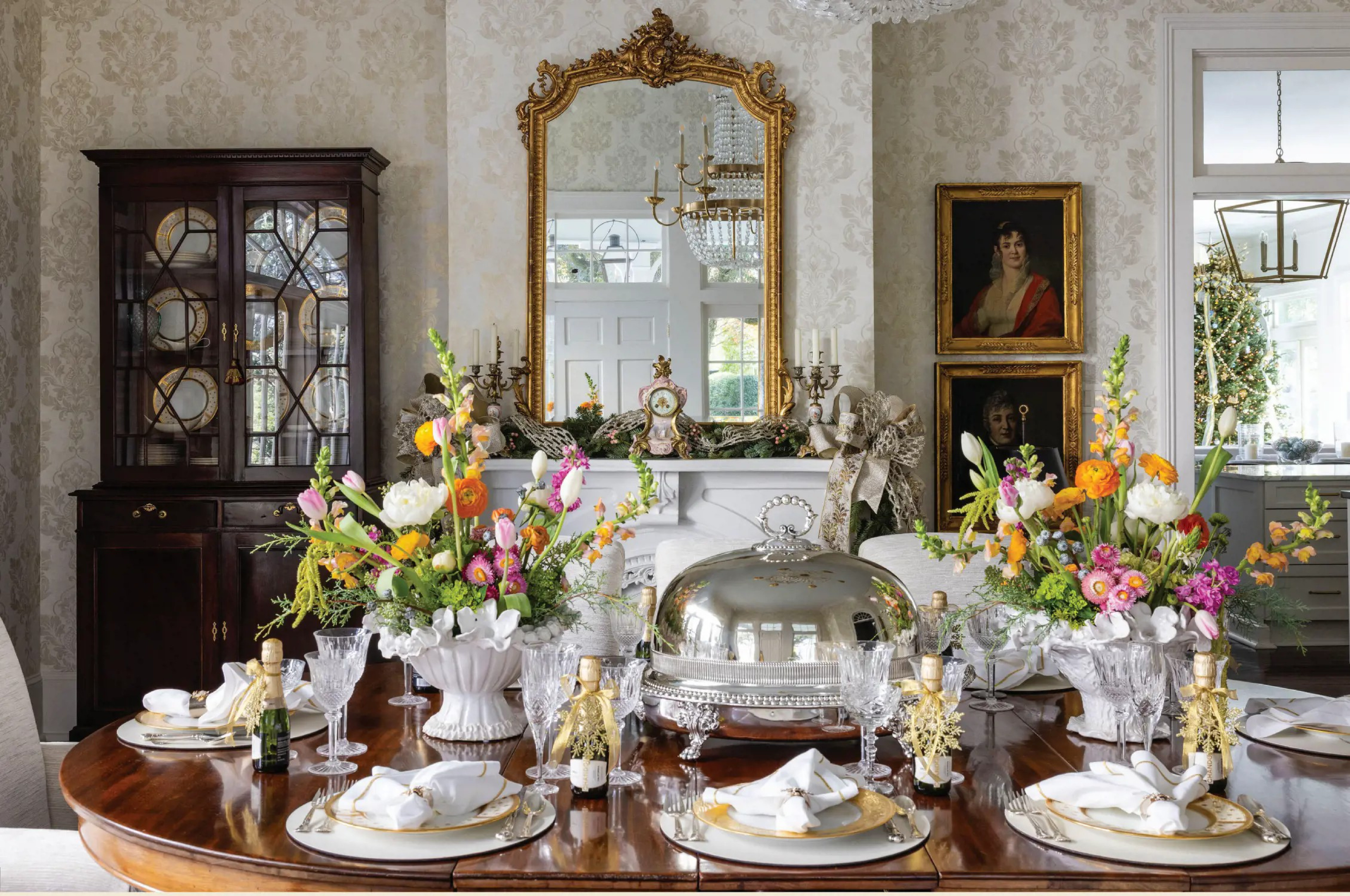
During the holidays, Katharine's door is always open, and the house is flooded with family and friends. The bar is stocked, and her family of gourmet cooks always has some delicacy prepared. "On Christmas Day, we have a formal sit-down dinner complete with fine linens, crystal and inherited antique china and silver," she says. With a nod towards spring, the floral arrangements in compotes are a unique and refreshing twist on traditional holiday décor.

The beautiful floral arrangements showcase tulips, ranunculus, hydrangeas, strawflowers, snapdragons, amaranths and Arizona blue spruce. Floral artist Melinda Mallery used bright pink as an unexpected nod to the holiday season. The handcrafted floral ceramic vessels are by Lisa Alpaugh of LiBird Studio.

"As an interior designer, I not only focus on aesthetics but also prioritize functionality. I love working closely with my clients to understand their vision and translate it into a practical and beautiful design. My journey into the world of interior design was very serendipitous. I was an antique dealer for almost 15 years and just as the market started to turn away from English antiques (i.e., brown furniture) one of my clients asked if I would consider decorating their home. Almost 20 years later, I have decorated homes ranging from grand country estates in Connecticut to summer homes in Martha's Vineyard. Every project reflects the unique personality and needs of the occupants," Katharine adds. "My work style is very 'hands on' and detail oriented. As Eames said, 'The details are not the details, they make the design.'"

SEE SOURCES, PAGE 112.

Read more about Katharine and her projects at reedacanthus.com, on Instagram **@reedacanthus**, on Facebook: **facebook.com/reedacanthusinteriordesign** and on Pinterest **pinterest.com/reedacanthus**.



Katharine's Tips for An Elegant Table

1. **Play with Color Palettes.** Instead of traditional red and green, experiment with a more modern color palette or unexpected color combinations and enhance with metallic accents.
2. **Incorporate Natural Elements.** Use fresh greens, pinecones or dried fruits to add warmth to more polished elements like glass ornaments or metallic accents.
3. **Use Unexpected Décor.** Mix non-traditional holiday pieces, like antique candlesticks or eclectic vases, with artfully draped garland for a fresh and unexpected look.

A Marvelous Mantel

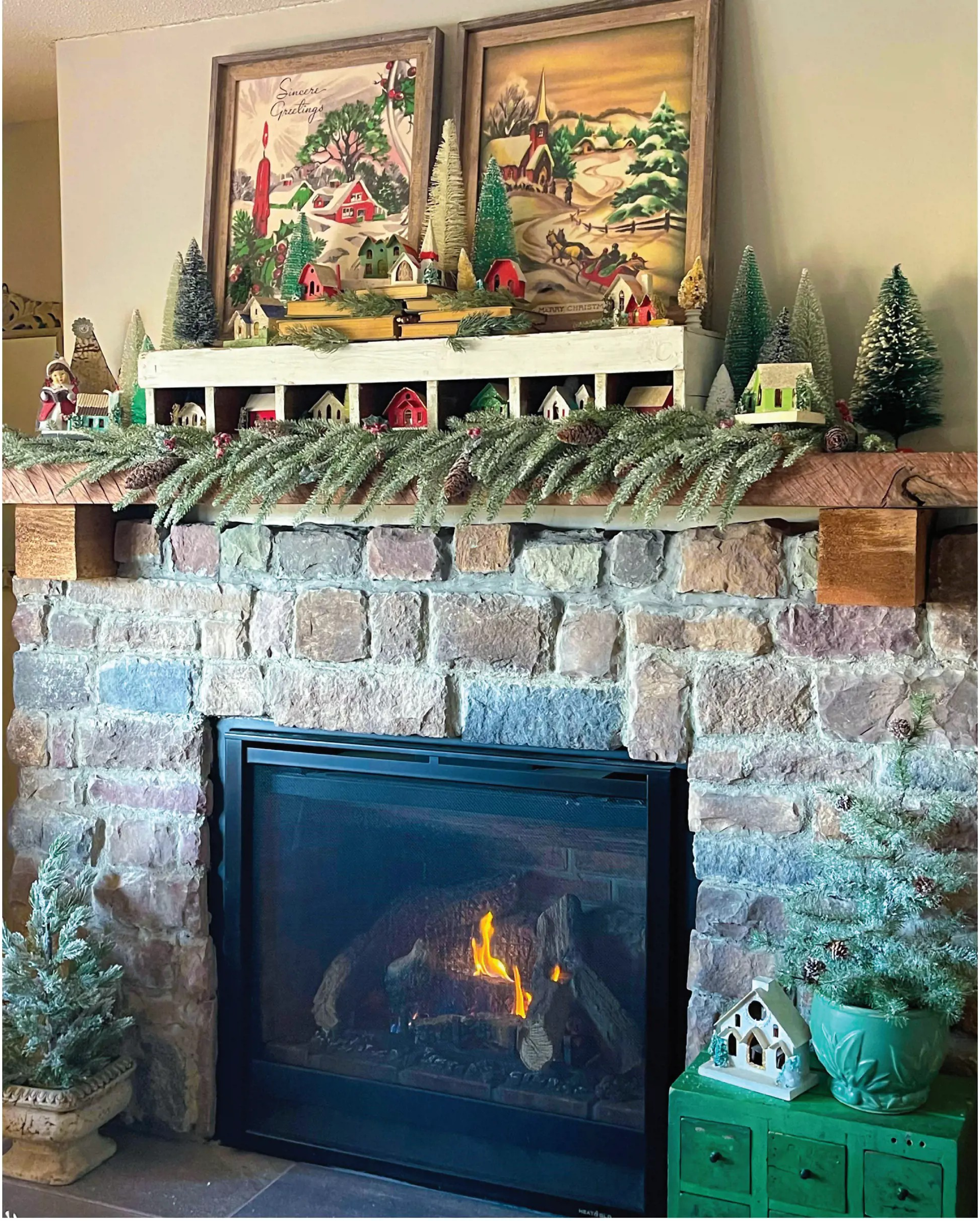
Multiple layers of vintage goodness make a stunning mantel.

Produced by **Kelly McMaster**
Styled and photographed by **Valerie Butler**

Sincere Greetings

Val Butler of Watertown, South Dakota inspires her followers, family and customers alike when it comes to her adept displays of vintage treasures, and her holiday inspired mantel is no exception.

"My mantle inspiration started with the enlarged vintage Christmas cards that I framed and set to the back of the mantel. I pulled from my vintage Putz house collections and went with the complementary colors in muted red, muted green and white," Val says of her display this year.



Val has an uncanny knack for styling her farmhouse and cottage finds in a way that is a true reflection of her respect for bygone days and preserving and honoring the past. Her use of old wooden crates, woolen stockings, bottlebrush trees, stacks of vintage books and greens make for an interesting and memorable mantel.

Val finds great joy when followers of her social media page (@barn_again on Instagram), which she launched in 2019, share memories sparked by items on her page. "I love seeing a glimpse into my followers' childhoods or their family stories. Barn Again isn't just about showcasing; it's a source of inspiration, encouraging others to style their spaces or kickstart new collections," she adds.

Val also offers online occasional sales on her website (barnagaincollections.com) and hosts a booth at a year-round indoor flea-market called Peddlers Market in Watertown.

TIME OF THE YEAR
Furniture • Decor • Accessories
Merry Christmas
Season's Greetings
Peace
WOODWAVES®
woodwaves.com

SHINY BRITE
Christmas Tree Ornaments
50 M.M. NO. K967 1-Doz.
JAPAN
SHINY BRITE
GLASS CHRISTMAS TREE ORNAMENTS
AMERICAN MADE
GLASS TREE ORNAMENTS
GLASS CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS
CHRISTMAS TREE ORNAMENTS
Premier
Christmas Tree Ornaments

Flour
Sugar

Very Merry VINTAGE VIGNETTES

Gather a few tips for creating special holiday moments in your home

Produced by **Kelly McMaster**
Styled and photographed by
Amanda Upton

SHINY BRITE
ORNAMENTS

stmas
COCOA
25¢
SHINY BRITE

Collecting flea market finds is so rewarding and fun… but what do you do with your treasures once you get them home? For Amanda Upton, she's perfected her skills at building amazing vignettes that capture the essence of the season and are constant conversations starters for friends and family. We wanted to learn more about her and her inspirations and processes!

***AFS:** How did your love of vintage begin? Do you recall your very first vintage find/purchase?*

Amanda: My love of vintage started when I was quite young and grew from a love of history. I can remember my interest in history, specifically WWII, as far back as the third grade. My first vintage purchase was a set of WWII American paratrooper "Jump Wings" that I won on eBay. I watched that item for weeks hoping it would be mine—I think that's where the thrill of the hunt first began.

***AFS:** How did you get started in styling vintage vignettes?*

Amanda: When I first started creating spaces and styling, I didn't realize I was creating little vignettes around our home. I've always enjoyed focusing in on a few objects and putting items together that at first glance, you perhaps wouldn't think they would work together. Whether it be random objects I just picked up at an estate sale, or a collection of green McCoy bowls, I love the challenge of focusing on just one cupboard or one shelf and creating interest and a simple eye-catching display.

***AFS:** Can you give us a few tips on how you begin, layer, and finish a vignette?*

Amanda: I do tend to follow these three steps:

1. I like to start fresh with a clean space. I'll clear out all the items on the shelf or in the cupboard, so I can visualize what I want to create. Sometimes I have an idea already and sometimes I'm just winging it!

2. When creating a Christmas vignette or shelf styling, I usually have a theme in mind - whether it's Putz houses, papier mâché Santa boots, or Shiny Brite ornaments, I usually gather some staple items to add height, layers, and interest. I'll grab stoneware bowls, crocks, wooden boxes etc. to be the background to whatever pieces I am trying to display and highlight.

3. Once I have my theme and background/filler pieces I just start playing around with layering in items and making the space feel balanced. It can be chaotic and stuffed full, or simple and sparse, but I always try to have balance.

GLASS CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS
SHINY BRITE
CHRISTMAS TREE ORNAMENTS
DOUBLE-GLO
star

CHRISTMAS TREE ORNAMENTS
GLASS CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS
SHINY BRITE
GLASS CHRISTMAS TREE ORNAMENTS
TREE ORNAMENTS
TREE TOP
AMERICAN MADE
GLASS TREE ORNAMENTS
CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS
Premier
NOMA
GUARANTEED TO LIGHT
Christmas Tree Ornaments

***AFS:** Where do you find the best vintage Christmas décor?*

Amanda: Vintage Christmas decor can be priced quite high at antique stores, so I like to hunt all year long for seasonal decor at estate sales, yard sales, and Facebook Marketplace. I find a lot of vintage Christmas during the summer months at local estate sales.

***AFS:** And finally, when you're not creating your special spaces, what are you up to?*

Amanda: My husband James and I live on an acre in Langley, British Columbia with our two sweet border collie pups, Auggie and Penny. We are both teachers and we love to travel. We just got married this past July in Italy and have a few antique picking trips in Europe planned for 2025. I also cohost a local vintage and antique market called the Vintage Pasture Sale as well as a space in Three Daisies Vintage in Aurora, Oregon where you can shop my finds.

To see more of Amanda's creativity follow her on Instagram: **@forestknollsvintage** and **@vintagepasturesale**.

Warm Up Your Holidays: Creating the Perfect Hot Cocoa Bar

There's no better way to embrace the festive spirit of the holiday season than with a cozy and inviting hot cocoa bar!

Written and photographed by **Stephanie Leleux**

Cocoa bars are more than just a place to get a sweet treat—they're the perfect way to bring friends and family together, creating memories that last long after the last sip is gone. Whether you're hosting a holiday party or simply looking to add a little extra warmth to your home this season, a cocoa bar is the ultimate way to spread joy and celebrate the magic of Christmas. This article will help you craft a hot cocoa bar that not only serves up the ultimate in holiday cheer but also adds a touch of vintage sophistication to your celebrations.

Hot Cocoa
1 Cup Cocoa
1 Cup Sugar
Add 2 tablespoons of cocoa mix to 8 oz of warm milk. Top with marshmallows, caramel, candy canes and lots of love.

NOSTALGIA
SALT

Hot Cocoa Recipe

Create a comforting and delicious hot cocoa that will warm hearts and hands alike. Here's a simple recipe to prepare a perfect cup of cocoa:

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup cocoa powder
- 1 cup sugar
- 8 oz warm milk
- Toppings: marshmallows, caramel, peppermint

DIRECTIONS:

1. Mix 1 cup of cocoa powder and 1 cup of sugar together until combined evenly.
2. Add 2 tablespoons of the cocoa mix to 8 oz of warm milk and stir until well blended.
3. Top with favorites like marshmallows, a drizzle of caramel and crushed candy canes.

For added convenience, keep your hot cocoa and toppings in glass airtight jars throughout the season.

THE SAME OLD-FASHIONED GREETING
FROM THE SAME OLD FRIEND YOU KNOW
MAY SANTA BRING
HIS CHOICEST GIFTS
TO YOU ACROSS THE SNOW

KITCHEN DÉCOR: EMBRACING VINTAGE CHARM

Even if you don't have a dedicated space for a cocoa bar, you can transform your kitchen into a nostalgic winter wonderland with a hot cocoa bar that showcases the timeless elegance of some of your favorite vintage pieces. Start by setting up your cocoa bar on a small table or a portion of your kitchen countertop. For a vintage look, choose vintage style dishware, like ironstone or jadeite for feature pieces. Arrange these feature pieces—such as plates, bowls and cake stands—strategically throughout to create an eye-catching display.

Incorporate vintage style Santa mugs into your setup for a whimsical touch. These delightful mugs, with their classic Santa designs, evoke fond memories and add a playful element to your cocoa bar. Display them prominently, either filled with steaming hot cocoa or nestled among your décor.

Art is another crucial element in any space. Choose Christmas art—think retro advertisements or classic holiday prints—to enhance the nostalgic feel. Consider adding vintage-inspired illustrations or classic Christmas scenes to create a cozy, timeless ambiance that ties the space together.

To create a truly cohesive holiday display, consider layering your cocoa bar with a variety of festive décor elements. Incorporating hand-painted gingerbread houses adds a charming, personal touch. Vintage-style ornaments, bottlebrush trees and pine garlands can seamlessly blend the cocoa bar into the rest of your holiday home décor.

The same old-
fashioned greeting
From the same old friend you know
May Santa bring
his choicest gifts
To you across the snow
Hot Cocoa
1 Cup Cocoa
1 Cup Sugar
Add 2 tablespoons of cocoa
mix to 8 oz of warm milk.
Top with marshmallows,
caramel, candy canes
and lots of love.

JADEITE IN CHRISTMAS DÉCOR

Jadeite is a type of glassware known for its soft, milky green hue that has become a beloved staple in vintage and farmhouse-style kitchens. Originally produced in the early to mid-20th century, jadeite has a timeless appeal that effortlessly complements holiday décor. Its serene green color pairs beautifully with the reds, whites, deeper greens and golds of Christmas, creating a festive yet elegant atmosphere. Whether you use them for serving treats or displaying décor, jadeite adds a nostalgic charm that makes it perfect for the holiday season. If you don't have access to vintage jadeite, there are great reproduction options available too!

COCOA BAR TREATS: FRESH BAKED GOODIES

No cocoa bar is complete without an assortment of delicious, sweet treats. Chocolate chip cookies, rich double chocolate chip cookies, and spicy gingerbread cookies are classic favorites. To make your cookie selection even more special, present them in vintage-inspired cookie jars or on elegant jadeite cake plates.

SWEETEN THE EXPERIENCE WITH COCOA BAR TOPPINGS AND EXTRAS

Elevate your cocoa bar by offering a selection of festive favorites that add both flavor and fun.

Caramel Candies: Soft caramel candies are a delightful addition to any hot cocoa. Drop one or two into a steaming cup, and watch as they slowly melt, infusing the drink with a rich, buttery sweetness that pairs perfectly with the deep chocolate flavor. For an extra indulgence, drizzle caramel sauce on top of your cocoa to create a decadent treat.

Peppermint: Peppermint is a classic holiday flavor that brings a refreshing twist to your cocoa. Offer crushed peppermint candies or mini candy canes as a topping option, allowing guests to stir them into their drinks for a burst of cool, minty goodness. The peppermint not only adds a festive touch but also enhances the richness of the cocoa with a crisp, invigorating note.

Marshmallows: Marshmallows are a must-have topping for any hot cocoa bar. Whether you prefer the classic fluffy white marshmallows or gourmet varieties in different shapes and flavors, they add a light, airy sweetness that perfectly complements the warmth of the cocoa. Pile them high on top of your drink for a cozy finish, or try toasting them for a hint of caramelized flavor.

Other tasty cocoa bar extras include whipped cream, chocolate shavings, cinnamon sticks, toffee bits and crushed cookies. The possibilities are endless, so have fun customizing your cocoa bar with favorites of family and friends. With these delightful toppings and add-ins, you can turn a simple cup of hot cocoa into a personalized holiday treat that's just as enjoyable to create as it is to drink.

Warmest Wishes
Enjoy a cozy cup of hot cocoa with love and joy this holiday season!
Add 2 tablespoons of cocoa mix to 8 oz of warm milk. Top with marshmallows, caramel, candy canes and lots of love.

GIFT IDEAS: COCOA MIX AND TOPPINGS

Hot cocoa mix and toppings also make wonderful gifts. Package the mix and toppings in a vintage-style glass mug with a wooden lid and gold spoon. Attach a printable gift tag with a heartfelt message for a charming present. Here's a suggested message for your gift tag:

"Warmest Wishes! Enjoy a cozy cup of hot cocoa with love and joy this holiday season!"

A HEARTFELT FAREWELL

As my time as the 2024 *American Farmhouse Style* Magazine Brand Ambassador comes to a close, I want to express how honored and grateful I am for this incredible opportunity. It has been a joy to share my home and heart with you through these pages. Though I'm not saying goodbye, just "see you later," as I'll continue to connect with you on social media @returninggrace and through my blog on my website www.returninggrace.com. Thank you for joining me on this wonderful journey, and I look forward to many more shared moments in the future.

Happy holidays!
Stephanie

To Grandmother's House We Go

How one young couple honors bygone times.

Written by **Tina Agren**
Styling by **Living4Media/Emma Olai**
Photography by **Living4media/Cecilia Möller**

Susanna and Christian Andersson lived in a tiny house from the 1800s, but when Susanna's great-grandmother was moving to a smaller apartment, the opportunity arose to buy her home.

"We bought the house partly for nostalgic reasons," Susanna says. "My great-grandmother had lived in the house for over 50 years, and I spent a lot of time here when I was young. But it was also a chance to get a house where we could grow as a family. We both like older houses, and this one suited our style."

Guests are welcomed with a delightful Christmas atmosphere right at the entrance, featuring classic straw goats, pine branches and festive red apples.

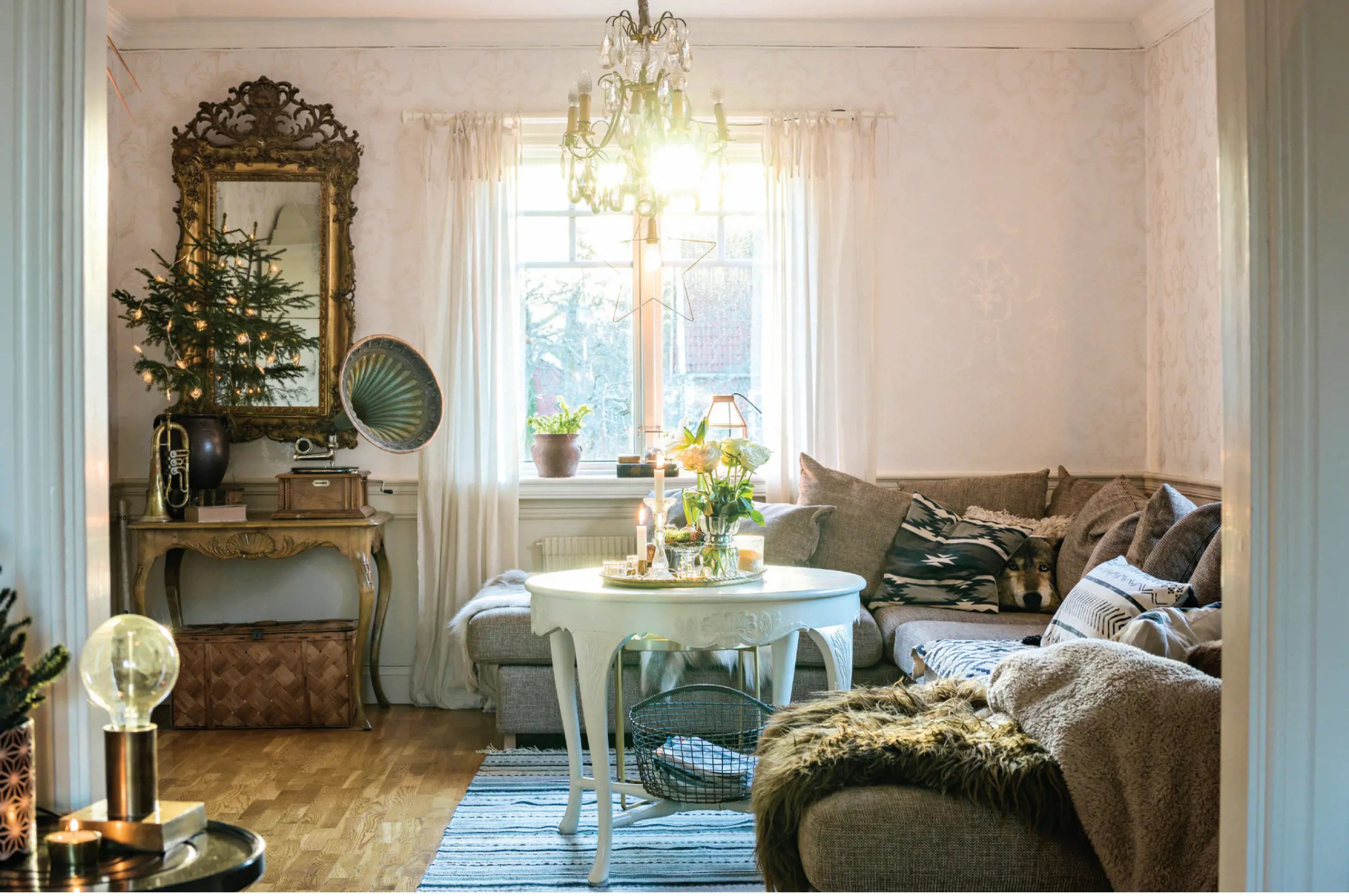
opposite | The unique sideboard is an old carpenter's bench that Susanna's great-grandfather built and used extensively. Susanna received it from her father, and the worn piece of furniture has been given a new life as a console table filled with lots of Christmas goodies.

RENOVATING AND RETAINING THE OLD STYLE

Susanna and Christian bought the house and started renovating. Christian is a carpenter, so they could do most of the work themselves. Susanna comes up with the ideas, Christian builds, and Susanna paints—a combination that solves most problems! The renovation has been careful, and together they have managed to create a style that combines turn-of-the-century romance with rustic details.

"We wanted the house to feel large, bright and spacious, as it's a 1920s-style house," Susanna explains. "It's important for us to retain the old feel even in the new additions we're making to the house."

During the kitchen renovation, they kept the old kitchen cabinets, updating the frames with new doors that Christian made, and Susanna painted. The old short-pile carpet was removed, and the wooden floor was sanded and painted a bit "roughly" to give it an old, worn look. Now the kitchen has a wonderfully rustic style that fits the house's character.



This room is a delightful collection of antique details. The flea market gramophone works, and when it's played, the cats scatter in all directions! The white-painted farmhouse rococo table was purchased from an antique shop. Susanna knew exactly what table she wanted and searched for two years before finally finding it.

SUNROOM POSSIBILITIES

The same attention to period details can be seen in the cozy sunroom. Susanna and Christian built it in 2012, and much of the material was reused. The windows are made from old window frames from the 1800s that Susanna's grandfather scraped and built into frames. The door to the deck came from a neighbor's house, and the floor was salvaged from an old outdoor patio in the same area.

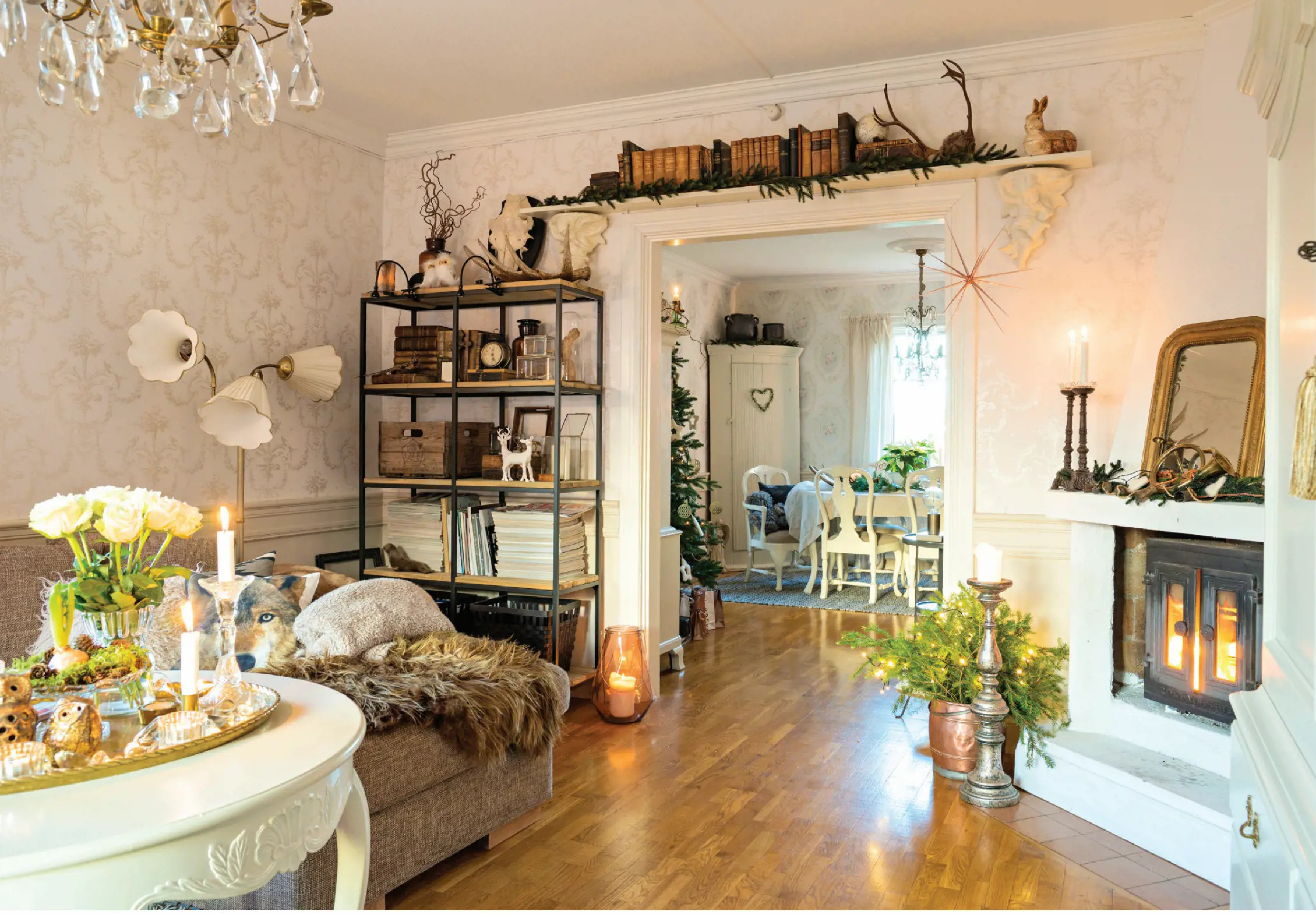
"The room is usually not heated in the winter, but it stays above freezing, so we can store summer plants here," Susanna explains. "For Christmas, when we have many people over, we heat the room, making it a perfect extra space when the whole family gathers."

The sunroom is also filled with creative ideas for decorating. The tables are made from welded bases with rustic wooden planks and parts of an old scaffolding. The sofa is made from pallets and spring bases with new upholstery. "I find a lot of inspiration for decorating online, in magazines, and from family and friends. I can spend hours searching Instagram; hashtag #decor is one of the best inventions ever!"

Susanna loves finding bargains, so the Christmas tree is decorated with inexpensive ornaments in white and gold. The white wool stars were a lucky find at a store bankruptcy sale.

top | During the kitchen renovation, the old cabinets were retained but rearranged and given new doors that Christian built and Susanna painted. The cork floor was removed, and the old wooden floor was sanded and painted a bit "roughly" to give it an old, worn look.

above | The antique sideboard in the kitchen has been painted in the same shade as the kitchen. Above the sideboard are open shelves that hold many cherished flea market finds.



above | The rustic table was made by Christian himself; the legs are welded, and the tabletop is made from parts of an old scaffolding that Susanna received from a relative. They also made the lamps themselves from baskets originally meant for garden decoration but repurposed as lampshades. The sofa is constructed from pallets and spring mattresses covered in linen fabric.

What remains to be renovated are the future guest room and, hopefully, a future nursery, as well as restoring the old garage in the basement. The extra garage is much needed—Susanna wants to own a VW Bug by the time she turns thirty! It's a promise from Christian, who has a great interest in old cars and is trying to get Susanna to share his passion. "The only old car I can imagine is a convertible Bug to cruise around in during the summers," Susanna laughs.

DECKING THE HALLS

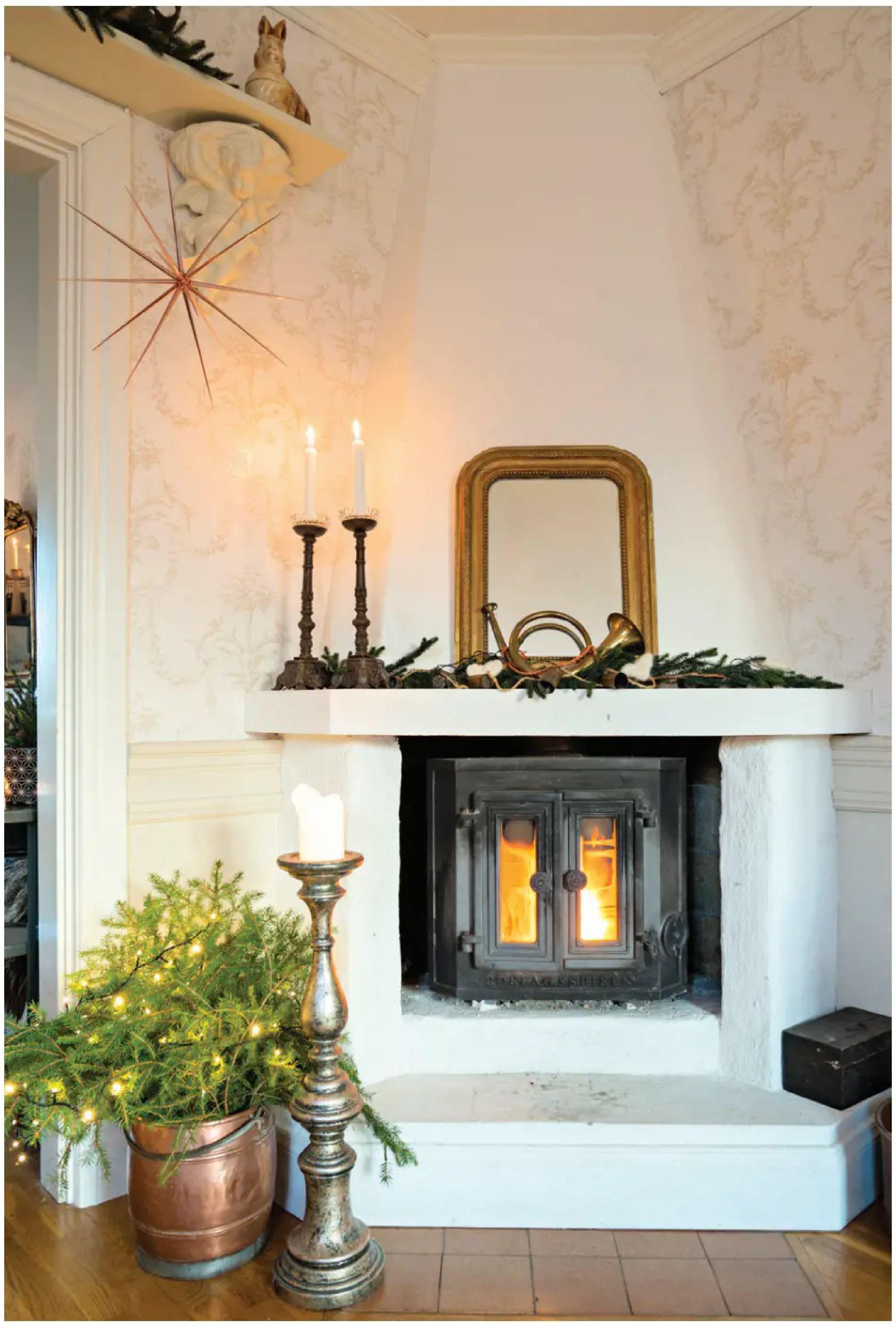
By the first Sunday of Advent, Susanna and Christian have already almost completely decorated for Christmas. They go "all in" to create a festive atmosphere in every nook and cranny. They both enjoy this time of year, when it's at its darkest, and you can bask in the glow of candles and curl up on the sofa. "I love Christmas!" Susanna says. "And the best part is the time before Christmas, when you get to bring out the Advent candles and start drinking mulled wine."

opposite, bottom | The dining room furniture is in farmhouse rococo style. In the background is a corner cabinet that's an heirloom from Susanna's great-grandmother and has been in the house for as long as Susanna can remember.

However, the Christmas tree doesn't go up until Susanna's birthday, which is on December 18th. The Christmas celebrations then commence with the family in various forms, sometimes at Susanna and Christian's place, and sometimes elsewhere. No matter where it is, there are always many people gathering for food and fun.

"The Christmas gift race the day before Christmas Eve is a tradition," Susanna explains. "My family gathers, we eat well and spend time together. After dinner, we have a gift race where everyone brings unwrapped presents, which can be anything from edible items to knick-knacks. The gifts are placed on a table, and everyone gets a number. One person at a time walks around the table and picks something. The game leader keeps an eye out to make sure no one cheats or takes too long—if you're too slow, the whistle blows! It always gets quite chaotic!"

The couple's interest in historical items is evident throughout the house. Many of the furniture pieces and knick-knacks



The brick stove provides wonderful warmth on cold days and adds a lot of coziness. When Susanna and Christian moved in, it was a regular open fireplace, but the chimney wasn't sealed, so Christian and a relative installed a flue and a stove cassette and rebuilt the fireplace.

EXPLOSIV VARA
NITROGLYCERIN AKTIEBOLAGET
GYTTORP
DB

above, left | The bedroom is a lovely mix of romance and rustic details.

above, right | The storage solution in the bedroom is a large antique wardrobe found on Craigslist.

are heirlooms associated with many memories. Susanna also loves finding treasures at flea markets and antique fairs. When she knows what she wants, she won't give up until she finds exactly what she's looking for.

"I'd love to replace the cabinet we have in the dining room with a taller one with glass doors," Susanna says. "I'm searching everywhere—on Craigslist and online auctions—but haven't found anything yet. Searching for something is almost half the fun; if you've been looking for a long time, you're so pleased when you finally find it! But if I don't find anything soon, I might have to try convincing my husband to build one instead…"

"I don't want a minimalist home; I prefer it to be cozy with lots of throws, rugs, leather and cushions," Susanna continues. "The best mix is blending old with new and drawing lots of inspiration from nature with branches, pine boughs and deer antlers. And it works perfectly for Christmas!"

Rustically Elegant

Style your home with a rustic yet modern elegance this Christmas.

Written, styled and photographed by
Haunstetter and Habben

Fir green meets natural colors and dark accents while a touch of gold and red tones brings Christmas elegance. Try these moody and unique stylings for something different this year.

Gifts should establish, maintain and deepen relationships. In this respect, gift-giving strengthens our togetherness. To celebrate this wonderful gesture appropriately, a gift also needs beautiful packaging. A classic bow is always a good idea. However, a dried pepper berry wreath also makes a wonderful design element.

* * *

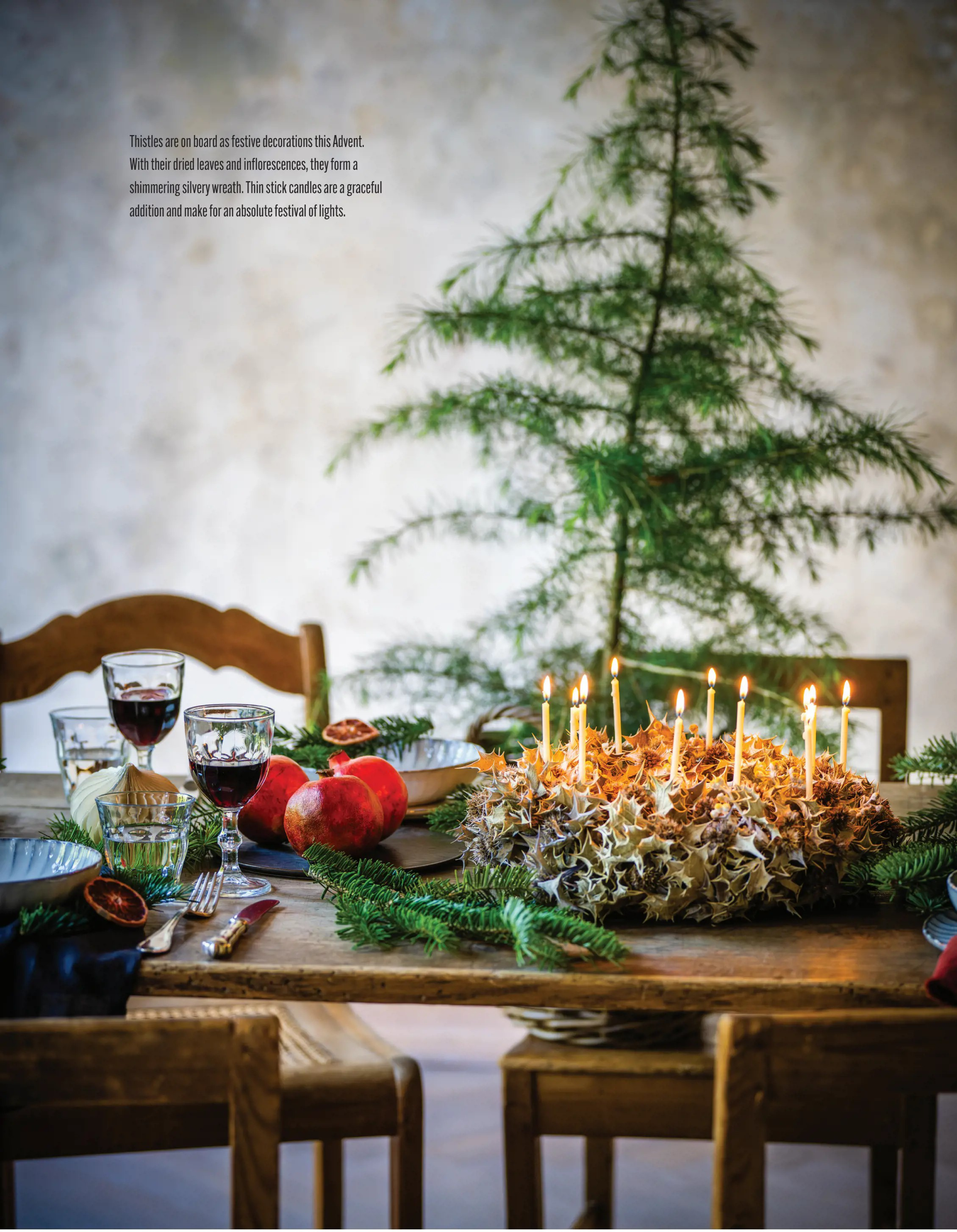
above, left | Making your own gingerbread house is a favorite Christmas tradition. The gingerbread house is known from the fairy tale Hansel and Gretel, and have always been a nostalgic Christmas treat, too. Enjoy them to the fullest this season!

right | Glass Christmas baubles in shades of red don't just look good on a tree. Arranged in a wooden bowl with fir branches and paper stars, they are a wonderful decorative element that bring warmth and Christmas elegance.

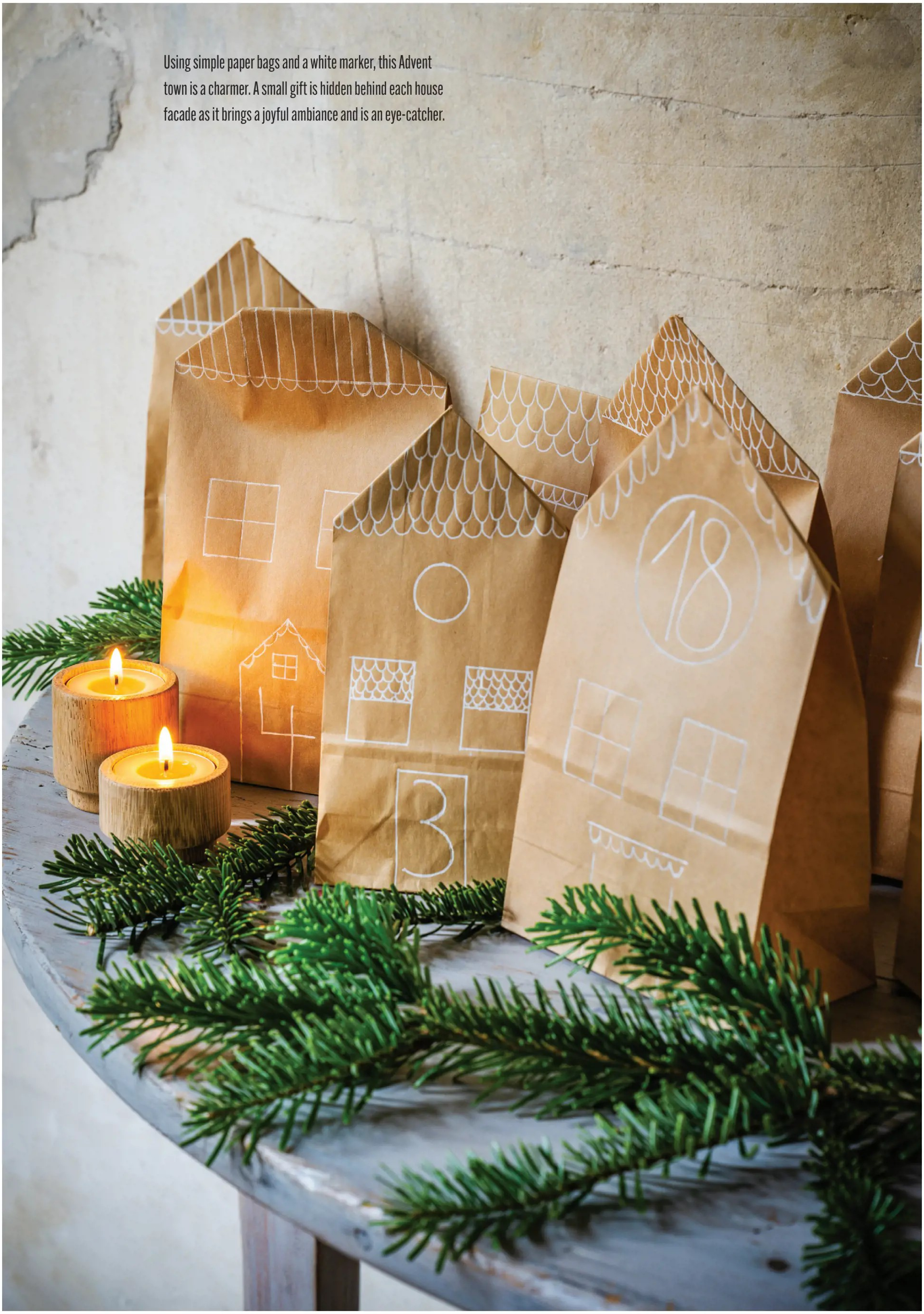
opposite | Decorated with golden frames, fir and dried flowers, these old, beautifully designed doors are given a touch of modernity.

above, left | A beautifully laid table with glass, ceramics, fir greenery and red pomegranates invites you to linger. Above all, the festive season celebrates values such as family, contemplation and togetherness.

above, right | We used crisp white dishware, which meets the classic fir tree branches perfectly. The bright red of the napkin and the dried blood orange are the color highlight as they bring warmth and joy to the table.



Thistles are on board as festive decorations this Advent. With their dried leaves and inflorescences, they form a shimmering silvery wreath. Thin stick candles are a graceful addition and make for an absolute festival of lights.



Using simple paper bags and a white marker, this Advent town is a charmer. A small gift is hidden behind each house facade as it brings a joyful ambiance and is an eye-catcher.

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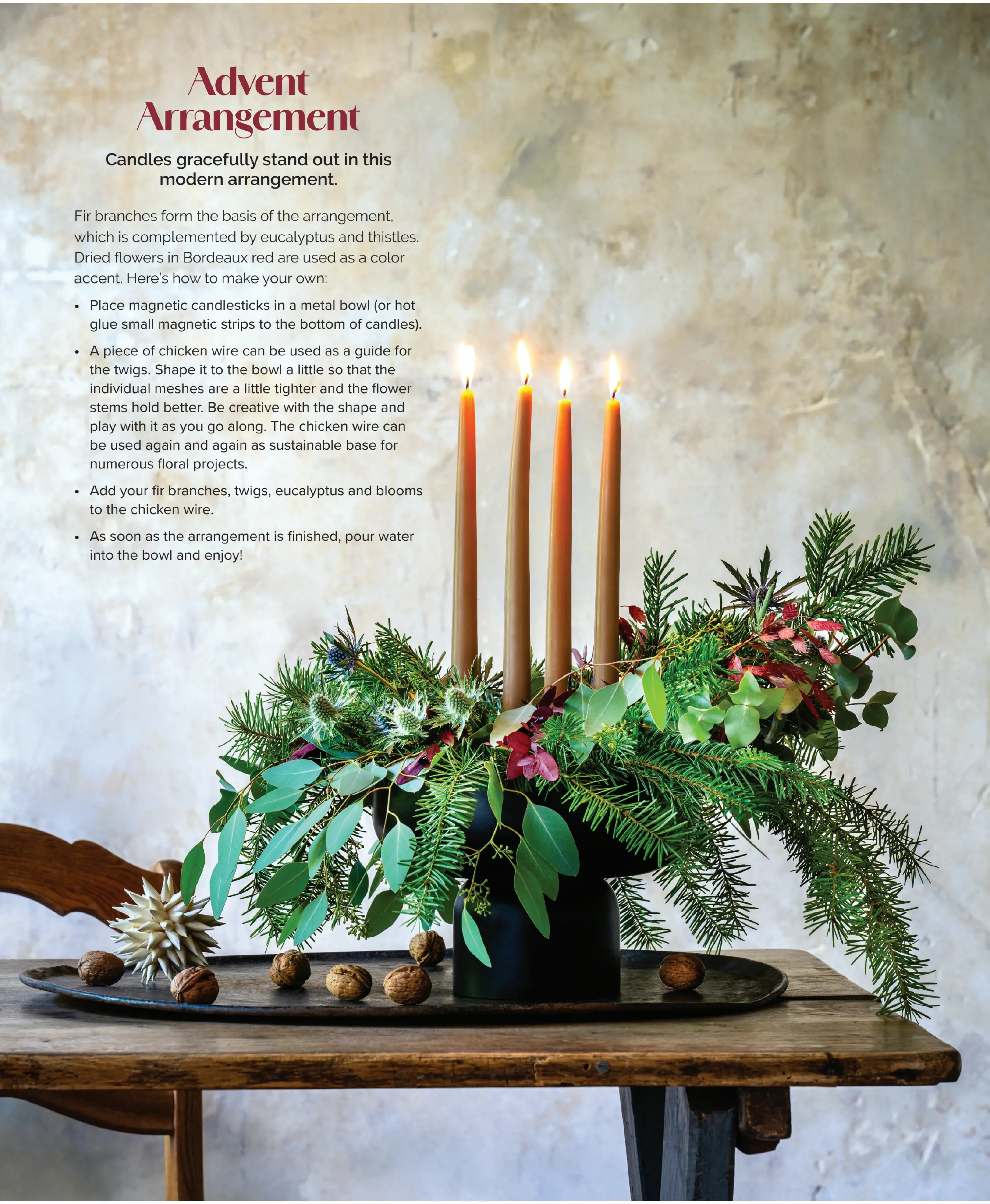
8

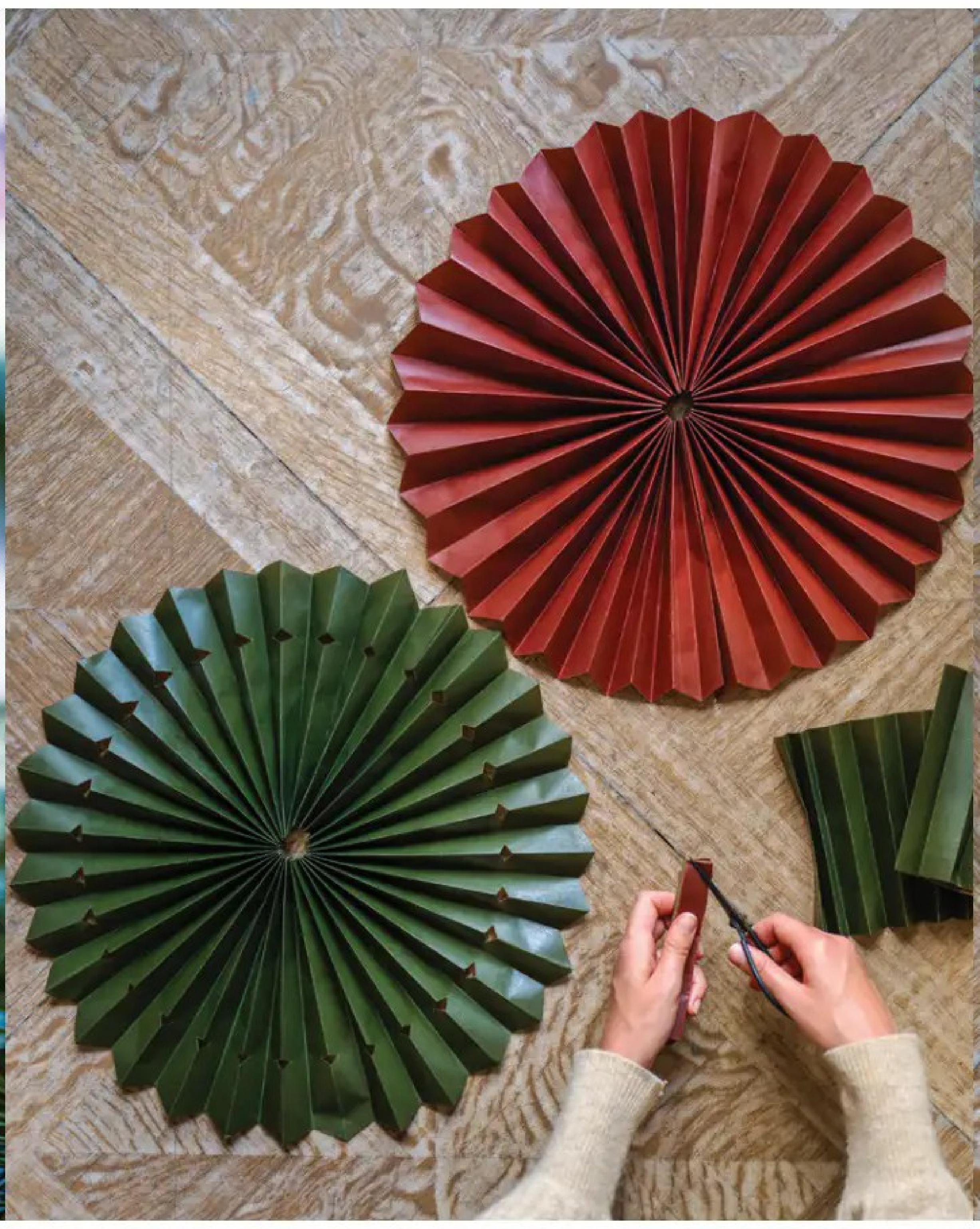
Advent Arrangement

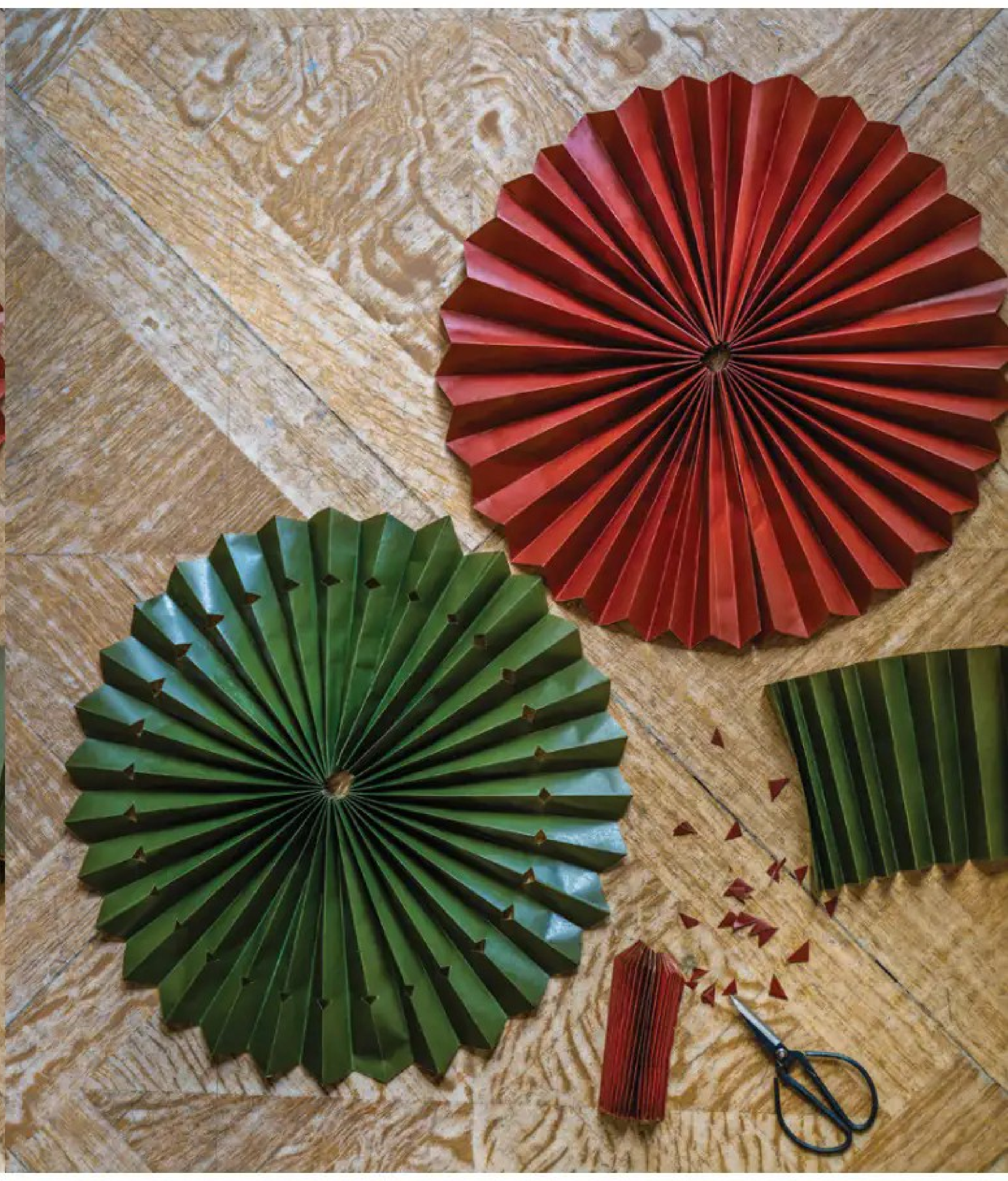
Candles gracefully stand out in this modern arrangement.

Fir branches form the basis of the arrangement, which is complemented by eucalyptus and thistles. Dried flowers in Bordeaux red are used as a color accent. Here's how to make your own:

- Place magnetic candlesticks in a metal bowl (or hot glue small magnetic strips to the bottom of candles).
- A piece of chicken wire can be used as a guide for the twigs. Shape it to the bowl a little so that the individual meshes are a little tighter and the flower stems hold better. Be creative with the shape and play with it as you go along. The chicken wire can be used again and again as sustainable base for numerous floral projects.
- Add your fir branches, twigs, eucalyptus and blooms to the chicken wire.
- As soon as the arrangement is finished, pour water into the bowl and enjoy!







Paper Rosettes

Handmade paper rosettes can serve as a decorative highlight for the festive season. Here's how to make your own:

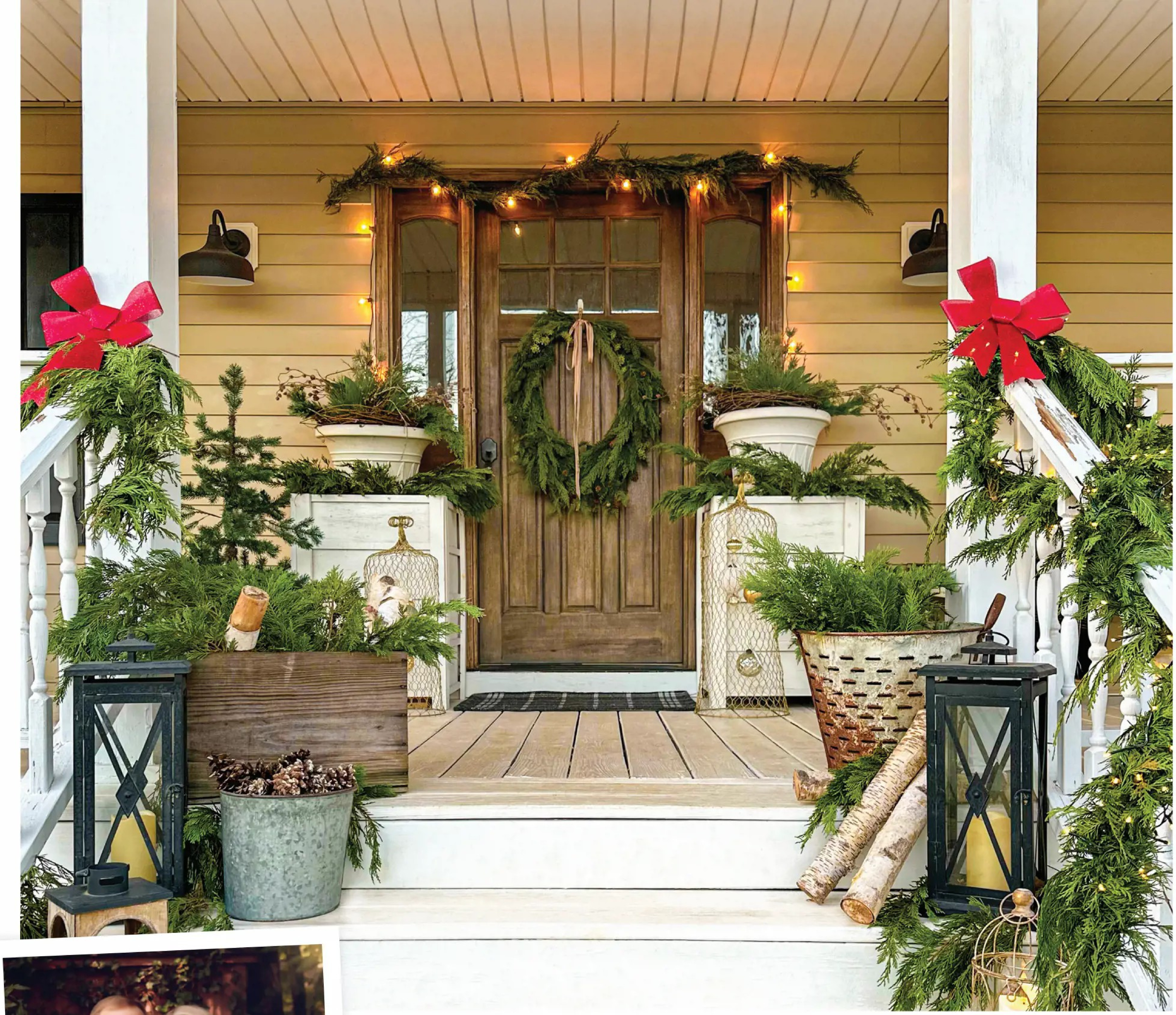
- Simply fold a regular accordion pattern out of wrapping paper and attach a wire in the middle. The paper rosette now looks like a butterfly, with the wire body in the middle and the two wings on the right and left. If you'd like to add a pattern, you can now use scissors or a hole punch to do so.
- Now complete the circle by joining the "wings" together using a stapler or glue.
- That‘s it! The paper rosettes can now be hung on the wall directly, with a string or just scattered throughout your tablescape.

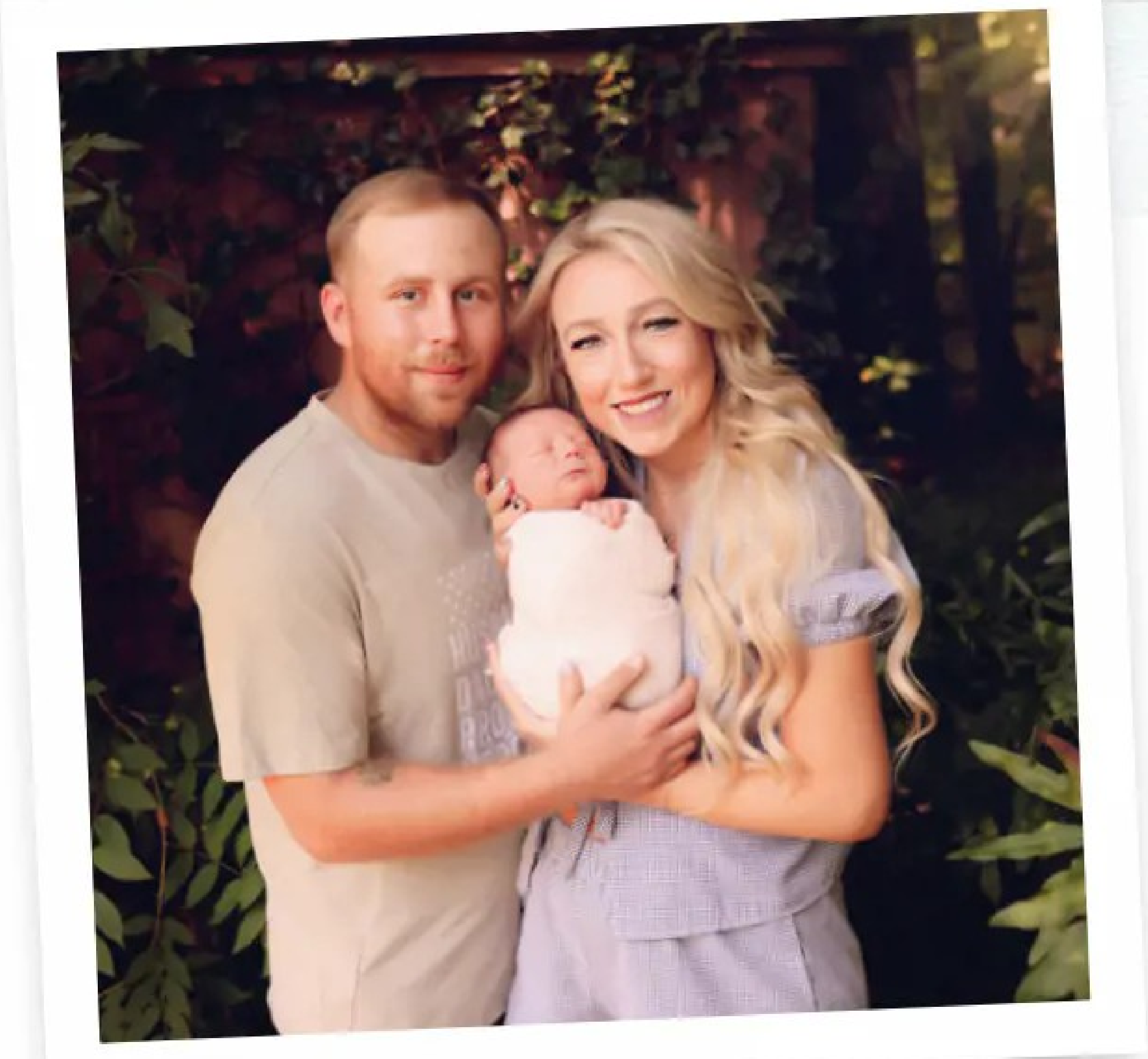
HOLIDAY
HOME TOURS
Nightly at 6pm
Hot Cider and Cookies Available
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Four calling birds

DECORATING WITH *Care*

An old-time Christmas feel comes to the North Carolina home of our former Brand Ambassador.

Written by **Victoria Van Vlear**
Photography by **Jessica Sigmon**





Jessica's front porch is a fun mix of live and faux garlands and pops of red. "I change out all the plants, cushions and pillows and décor," Jessica says. "I looked through old *American Farmhouse Style* magazines to find inspiration. I go through all the old ones from that season and then incorporate my theme." For a live garland, she has a trick to keep it looking good: "Soak it in the bathtub for a few days," she says. "Then you really get it moist, and it helps you to keep the moisture in and it takes a while to dry out."

For many of us, Christmas décor is a collection we've built up over many years and that brings us nostalgic joy every time we pull it out. Jessica Sigmon, the blogger and Instagrammer behind Itty Bitty Farmhouse, has returned to that method of nostalgic collecting with her own holiday décor. "I originally found my style by getting premade Hobby Lobby décor, but I don't do that anymore," she says. "Now I make more memories collecting the décor."

Jessica was the 2023 Brand Ambassador for American Farmhouse Style, and since finishing her column last Christmas, she has a precious son, Reid. It's a perfect year for her to continue to collect sentimental décor and create a hometown Christmas feel.

SIGMON FARM
HORSE DRAWN
RIGHT DOWN SANTA CLAUS LANE
SLEIGH RIDES
WARM BLANKETS · HOT COCOA

HOLIDAY
HOME TOURS
Nightly at 6pm
Hot Cider and Cookies Available
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HAVE YOURSELF A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS
"Have yourself a merry little Christmas.
Make the Yuletide gay. From now on, our
troubles will be miles away. Here we are as in
olden days. Happy golden days of yore.
Faithful friends who are dear to us, ather
near to us, once more. Through the ye s we
all will be together, if the fates allow. H ng a
shining star upon the highest bough. An have
yourself a merry little Christma w."

With so many different garlands and trees throughout the house, Jessica has to be strategic not only about where to put them, but how and when to buy them. She started out with all faux garlands that were less expensive, and she's slowly replacing them. "Each year, I buy a new, real faux garland, the nice ones," she says. "I only do one a year, because it's expensive." That way, she's able to spread out the cost while still decorating her spaces each year.

HOUSE HAPPY

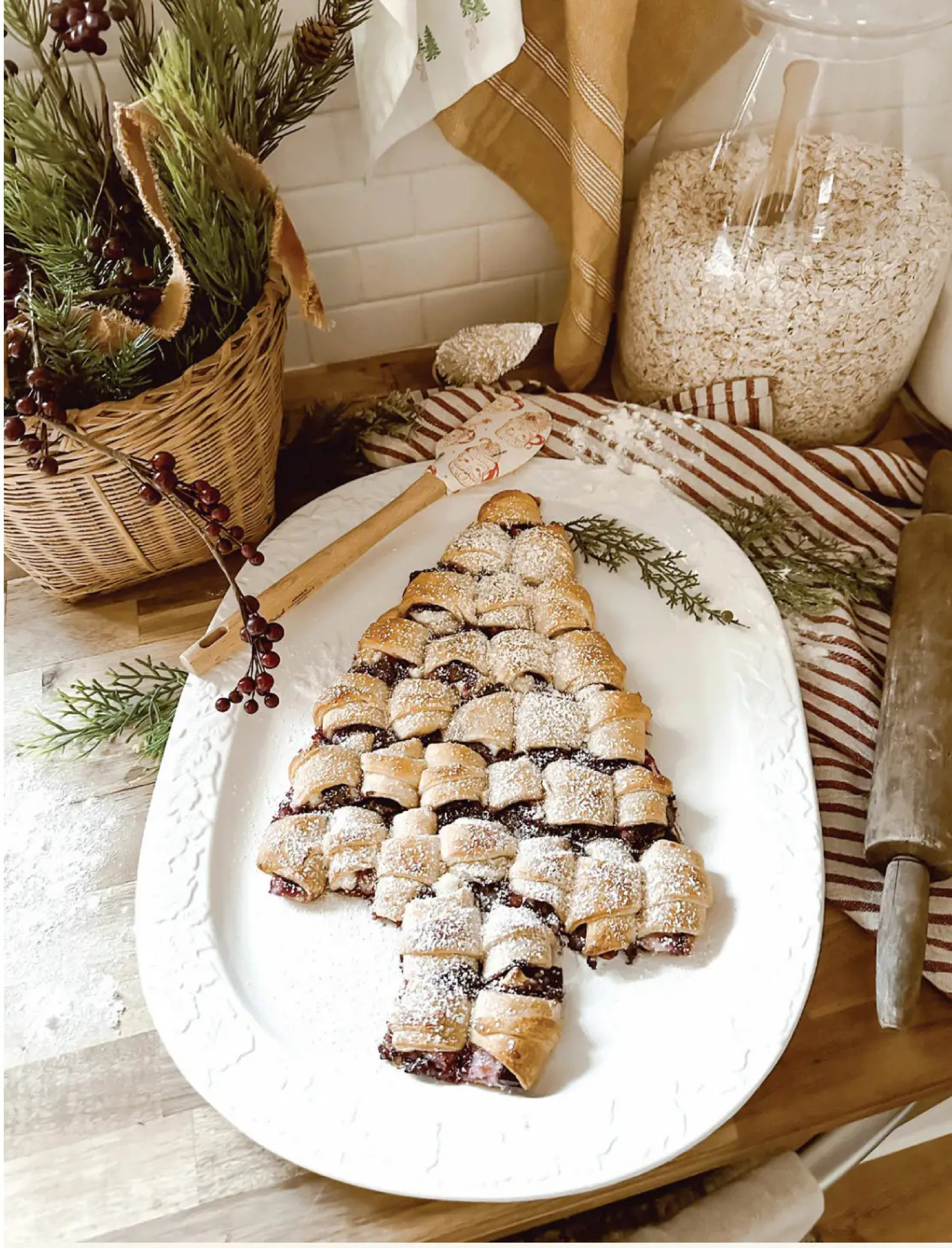
Jessica and her husband Michael have lived in their North Carolina house since 2019. It's a charming 1,600 square feet, and the couple has spent the last five years updating rooms, including replacing flooring, adding wallpaper and lots of wainscoting. Jessica picks a Christmas theme each year for her house, and this year, she chose a hometown feel. "I wanted an old timey Christmas," she says. "I have a handmade vintage village, and a village Christmas tree. I wanted a vintage farmhouse feel."

Jessica starts her holiday décor both inside and outside the house with garlands in almost every room, including bathrooms and the kitchen. Then she adds Christmas trees and other Christmas touches to make each room feel special. "I try to keep 50% of [our everyday décor]," she says. "I start November 1, and it takes me at least a week."

The dining room is Jessica's favorite in her house during Christmastime. "That's where I always put my big tree," she says. This year, Jessica added a variety of Christmas village houses as ornaments, and the flocking adds an air of classic wintertime.

Cake
ugar
co
ur

ROSEMARY & MINT
MULTI-PURPOSE CLEANER
DUNDEE



O CHRISTMAS TREE

One of Jessica's main decorations are the eight different Christmas trees she has inside and outside. "I don't decorate all the trees, but they are up aesthetically," she says. "When I walk into a room, I want to see a Christmas tree, not an empty space." The largest one is a flocked faux tree in the dining room, to which Jessica added Christmas village houses to work with her theme. While the trees inside are faux, "we do a real one outside, and real ones in the planters," Jessica says. Because she puts them up so early, she tends to take them down right after Christmas. "I'll leave the real one up and some of the ones that aren't decorated," she says. "But I do take down the overt Christmas stuff."

BABY'S FIRST CHRISTMAS

Jessica's son Reid was born in August, and Jessica is excited to experience his first Christmas. "I'm excited for him to get to do all the Christmas events and activities with us," she says. She's already thinking about future decorating, wanting to head toward brighter colors. "I'll do more traditional Santa decorations with bright colors to help him enjoy Christmas," she says. Now she and Michael get to build memories with their growing family, and decorating for Christmas is a central activity to the Christmas season.

SEE SOURCES, PAGE 112.

Christmas Tree Pastry

This food is a great Christmas party share, since it both looks and tastes delicious.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:
- 2 packages crescent rolls (8 count each)
- 6 ounces soft cream cheese
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- Pie filling or jam, as needed
- Dark chocolate chips (optional)
- Powdered sugar, for dusting

WHAT YOU'LL DO:
1. Preheat the oven to 375°F.
2. Mix together the cream cheese and 1/2 cup powdered sugar, until fluffy.
3. Roll out the crescent rolls and separate them into the individual pieces of dough.
4. Add the cream cheese, pie filling or jam and dark chocolate chips (if using) into each crescent roll, then roll them up.
5. Place them on a baking sheet in a Christmas tree shape.
6. Bake for 15 minutes, or until golden brown.
7. Lightly dust the tree with powdered sugar before serving.

Crockpot Candy

One of Jessica's favorite Christmas traditions is making candy with her mom. Here's one of their classic recipes.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

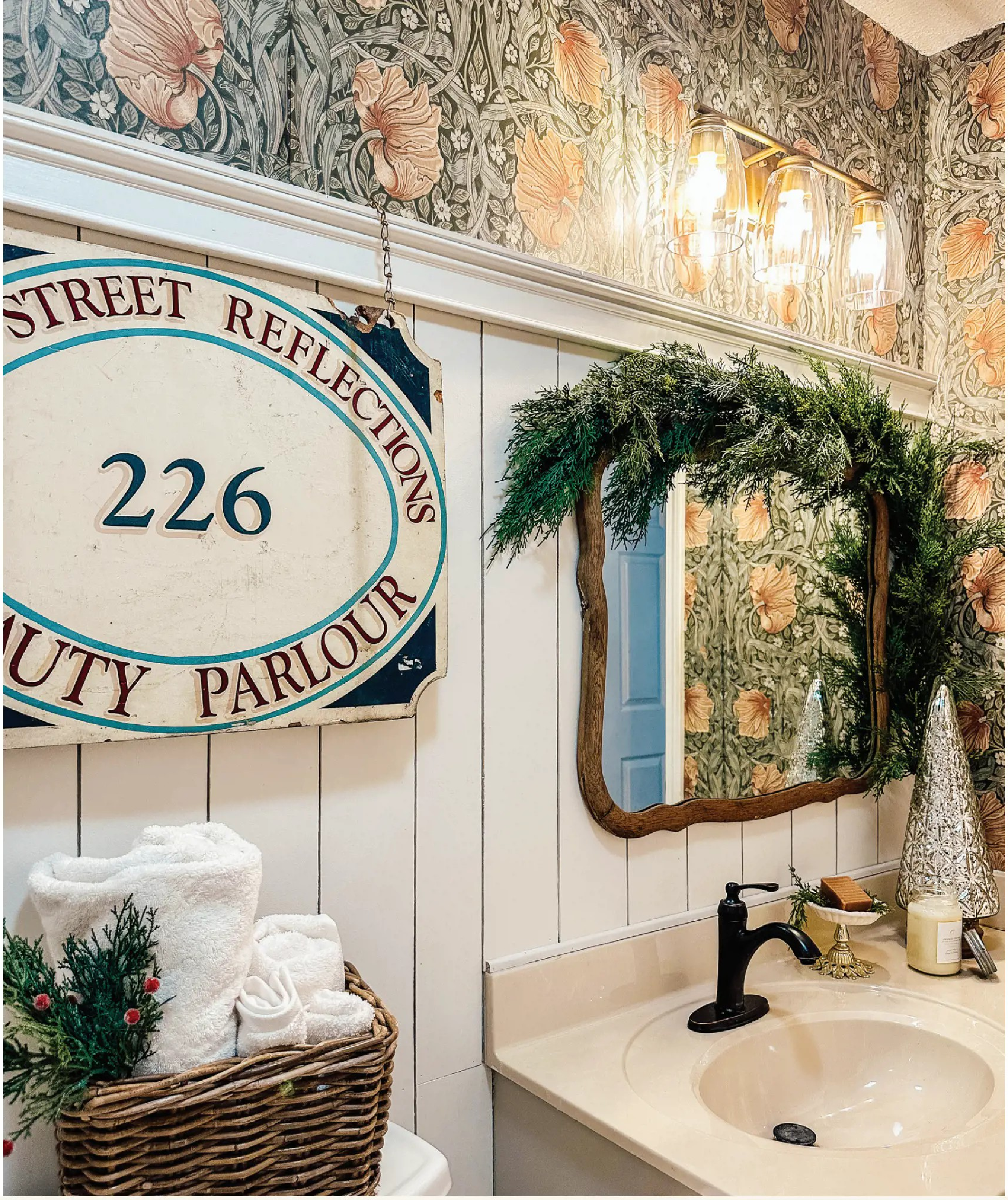
- 16-ounce jar lightly salted, dry-roasted peanuts
- 22 ounces (2 11-ounce bags) white chocolate chips
- 5 ounces (half a 10-ounce bag) dark chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1/3 cup toffee bits
- Festive sprinkles
- Sea salt (optional)

WHAT YOU'LL DO:

1. Place the peanuts at the bottom of a slow cooker.
2. Add the white chocolate chips, dark chocolate chips, peanut butter and toffee bits.
3. Turn the slow cooker to low and cook for 1 hour, then stir until the chocolate mixture coats the peanuts.
4. Cook for another 30 minutes and prepare a sheet pan by lining it with parchment paper.
5. Drop spoonfuls of the candy mixture onto the parchment paper and add festive sprinkles and sea salt, if using.
6. Let the candy cool completely, about 30-60 minutes, before serving.

MERRY CHRISTMAS
MASON
CHRISTMAS DAY

In the kitchen, faux garlands liven up the open shelves Jessica has. "I like to add in the little garland pieces, the little mugs and everything on the shelves," she says. "I always think, 'What can I use and what can I get rid of for the season?'"



In the guest bathroom, Jessica keeps up most of her everyday décor, adding only small touches that will make the room feel festive but also stay functional. "I like to do a little bit of garland over the mirror, and then a simple mercury tree on the sink," Jessica says. "You can still use the bathroom functionally."

Pattern Master

Blogger and Instagrammer Jessica Sigmon of Itty Bitty Farmhouse is an expert when it comes to choosing patterns in permanent décor elements like rugs and wallpaper. Here's a look into her process.

Seasonal longevity. When looking for a rug or wallpaper, try to picture it in the space at different times of the year. "I want something that will go from season to season," Jessica says. That means you need to choose one that you won't dislike in the summer because it's dark or in the winter because it's too light. Find what will suit your style and aesthetic year-round.

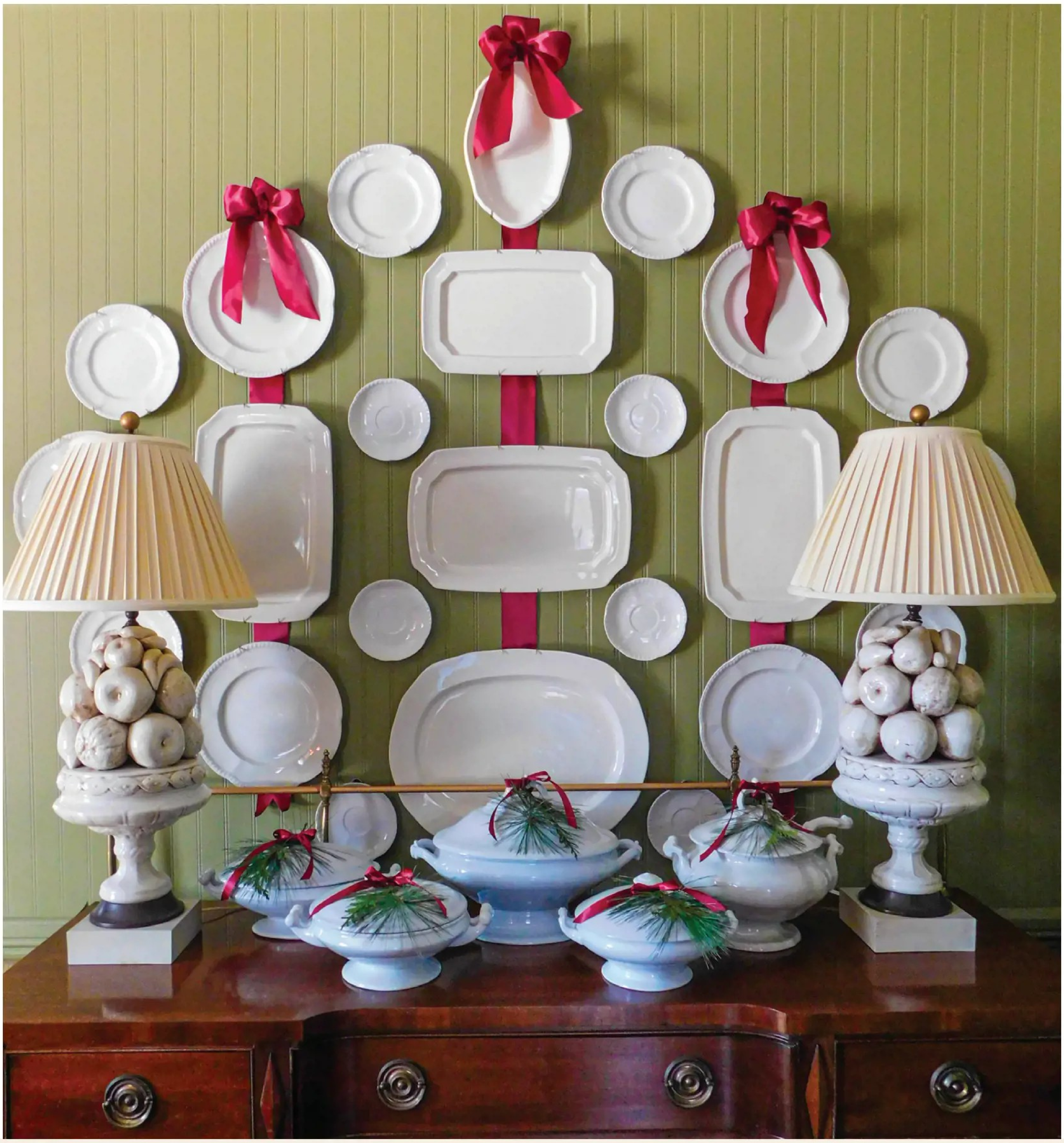
Feature focus. Do you want your wallpaper or rug to be the main feature in the room? That's not always the case. "I like to choose a blended but mesh pattern so it doesn't stand out to your eye," Jessica says. If the wallpaper will be the room's main feature, choose a pattern that's bright in color and bold in design. But if you want another element to be the focal point, let your wallpaper or rug fade into the background with a more subtle pattern.

Go with what you love. This may seem like a cliché, but what's on trend at the moment may not be what you want on your walls or floor long-term. "I'm loving the floral block with the old timey look right now," Jessica says. Know yourself: Will you want to switch out the rug or wallpaper within the next few years? Then a more trendy pattern would work. But if you like to pick something and keep it forever, make sure you really find a pattern you love, even if it's not the trendy style at the moment.

A Classic Christmas

A traditional style home decks the halls with ribbons, holly and pine sprigs for a winter woodland holiday.

Written by **Michelle Mastro**
Photography by **Kemp Harper**



A traditional Christmas tablescape can infuse your holiday home décor with classic charm. This is why interior designer Kemp Harper of The Colonial on Park (@thecolonial_on_park) prefers a more traditional Christmas style. "When it comes to Christmas, I like it to feel cozy and nostalgic," he explains. With this woodland-inspired tablescape, he wanted touches of traditional Christmas accents, like red ribbons and tartan patterns, to foster a historic themed holiday. He started with Williams-Sonoma plates to help set a classic tone, which he then peppered with natural pieces, like pinecones and evergreens, from his property's woods to create a beautiful fusion of natural and traditional.

Mix Old and New. Kemp likes to mix and match his holiday décor. For example, he blends real stems into faux pine garlands, as he says, "it looks better than any premade garland you'd find at the store." But he also mixes old and new décor items like his holly and pine Williams-Sonoma plates with classic gold plated flatware, a special gift from his mom.

opposite | Tie it Up. Kemp added ribbons behind his plate gallery wall for Christmas. "My theme this year was very classic, and the maroon ribbons reminded me of an old-fashioned holiday. I also liked the maroon juxtaposed against the sage green wall coloring." The final result was a fusion of classic Christmas colors and tropes.

O' CHRISTMAS TREE

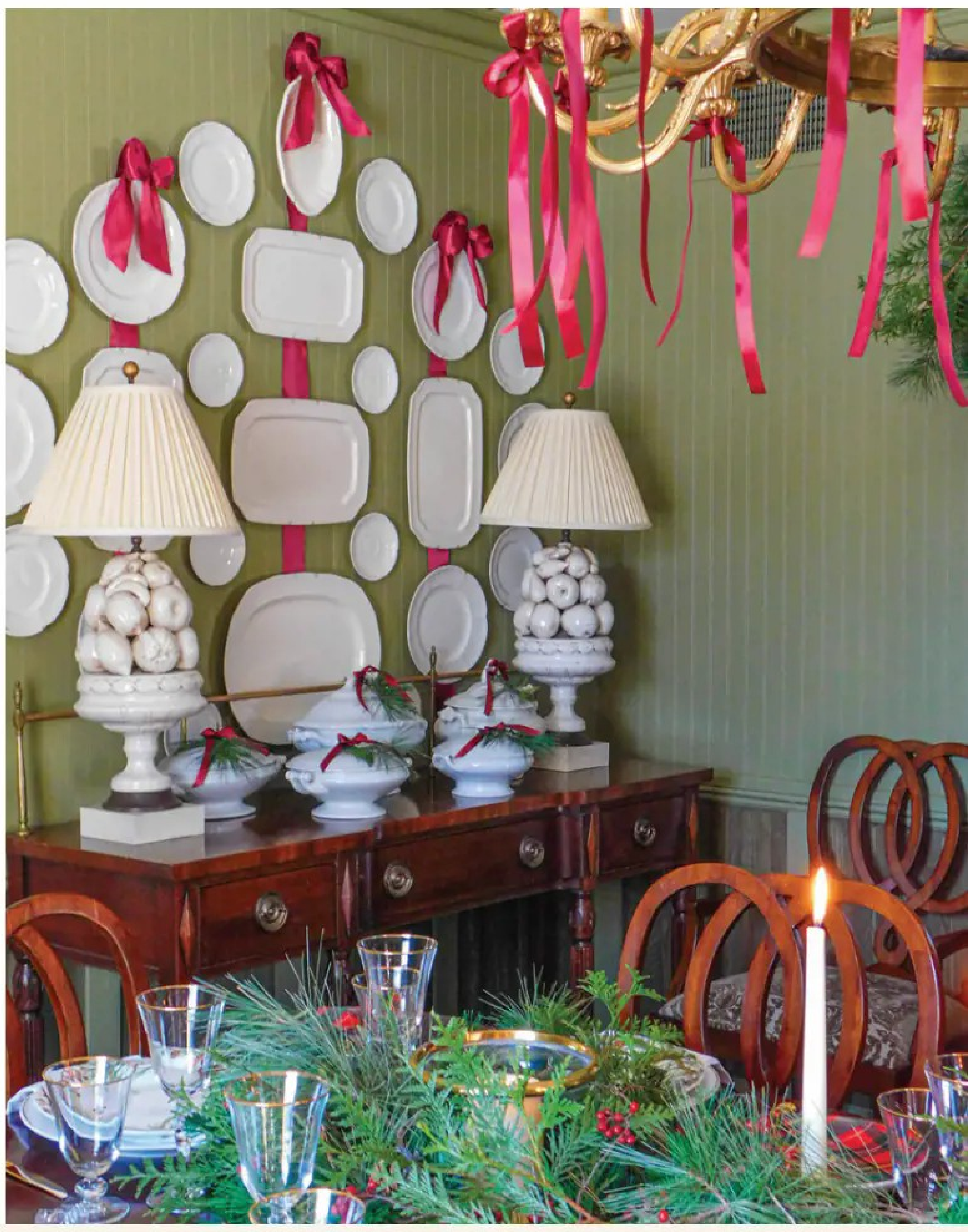
When you design with nature, you honor the season. It's a sentiment that Kemp has taken to heart, as he gathers items from nature for his Christmas table's centerpiece. "This centerpiece was made from my backyard pine trees and berries from our crabapples," he says. He prefers to collect such pieces from his woods than visit a plant nursery whenever possible. "I usually get crafty with what is readily available, whether it be seasonal fruits or flowers from my backyard."

All this he added to the Williams-Sonoma plates from the brand's 'Winter Berry' collection. The plates include images of delicate holly and pine to complete the winter woodland look. The room's Christmas tree in the corner, meanwhile, further pulls together the room's décor with its giant red baubles and ribbons reminiscent of the table's holly. "The thing I love most about decorating for the holidays is coming up with new and inventive ideas," he says of his décor choices. "This year, it was all about dressing everything in silk ribbons in a deep maroon."

MODERN TOUCHES

At the same time, Kemp weaves in modern touches along with his woodland pieces. "I like to modernize things by keeping it a little more casual with simpler forms like glass hurricanes and tartan," he explains. Of course, he's also sure to pop in a few antiques to connect every detail of his Christmas décor back to his historic 1940s era house. "Whenever possible, I love to pick up little salt and pepper cellars, when I'm out antiquing, for example, and each place setting receives one."

In this way, he blends classic and modern pieces into his overall woodland themed tablescape. The gold plated flatware, for instance, was a special gift from his mom, and he and his partner, Kevin, use it every holiday to offer a classic feel to their tablescape. "I prefer a high-low mix of curated items because we love things with a history." In fact, when they host Christmas Eve dinner, the event tends to lean more formal, so Kemp is sure to highlight these more old-school pieces for a vintage style tablescape perfect for a historic themed Christmas. "I think it's something special and memorable for our guests," he says.



Ready, Set, Ribbon

This holiday season, Kemp chose to incorporate lots of red ribbon into his décor to create a classic Christmas feel. Learn how to get the look with these simple DIYs.

Add Ribbons to a Plate Gallery. For his traditional style home, Kemp has a few plate gallery walls. But to truly deck his halls this year, he opted to weave in some beautiful red ribbon. This display of plates uses a wide silk ribbon in maroon. "For each column of plates, I cut a long vertical piece of ribbon and then at the top of the strand, I left enough slack to create a loop attached with a pin." He then slipped another piece of ribbon through the loop to tie a bow on top that he then pinned in place.

Tie Ribbons in a Chandelier. To dress up his chandelier for Christmas, Kemp used a thin red ribbon in silk. Getting the look in your own chandelier or light fixture is a cinch. "Once you decide how big and long you want your bow and tails to be, use that piece as a guide to cut the rest of your strands," he says. "It's a small effort that makes a really big impact." While you can use different ribbon widths for different elements in a room, Kemp says he prefers thin ribbon for the ends of tree branches. "However, for something more impactful like a plate gallery, I prefer the thick ribbon." So, choose the ribbon style, color and width right for your home's décor.

To see more of Kemp's work, follow him **@thecolonial_on_park** on Instagram.

A Magical Hygge Holiday

A couple's dream home comes alive as they celebrate their first Christmas.

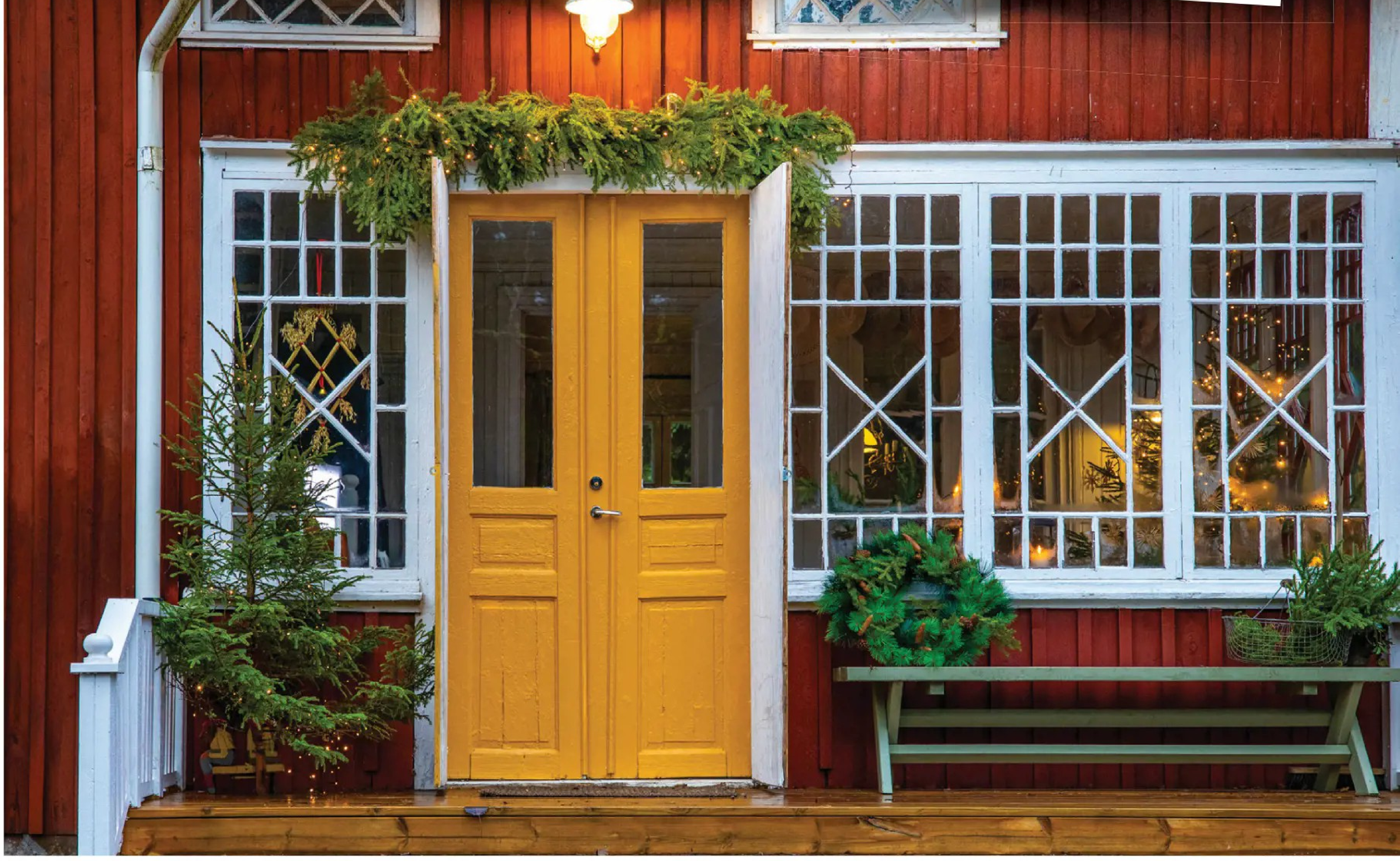
Produced by **Living4media/Lise Mari Stang-Jacobsen**

affinade

Vibeke and Petter

have found the country cottage farmhouse they've dreamed of after years of looking. Now, they've decorated for Christmas for the very first time, making every corner feel cozy. Vibeke has a special talent for creating magic out of simple materials that is inspiring and attainable. "I like to tinker with things and create something out of very little," she says.

Through the charming windows of the glass veranda, you can see the twinkle of many small lights. You can make out fir branches, wreaths and a warm atmosphere. As you get closer, you'll see a rustic board with saffron buns, steaming cups and a beautiful centerpiece on the table. Vibeke's beautiful still life displays and stunning tables are another forte. On Instagram, she has thousands of followers from around the world who are inspired by her at @vibekedesign. She stands out among interior accounts, drawing you into a dream world through her photos. Today, she receives interior design and photography assignments both at home and abroad, and she loves to let her creativity flow. "When I get into that bubble, I really enjoy myself. My favorites are natural materials, flowers and recycled materials," she says.



The traditional barn red exterior accented with a bright, golden door is extra warm and welcoming with the fresh greens Vibike added for the holiday season.

Vibeke keeps her Christmas styling simple by adding splashes of red in her linens and pillows, bundles of fresh greens and florals. The aroma of fresh carved oranges fills the air.

THE DREAM OF A COTTAGE

Hunting for old treasures is a joy and interest that Vibeke and Petter share. Often, he gets more excited than she does. For several years, Vibeke dreamed of a cottage in Sweden—a haven where she could freely express her creativity. At the top of her wish list was a kitchen with a white-painted open fireplace with a bread oven—a "spis," as they say in Sweden. When the couple first came for a viewing, it was far from the charming place it is today. The "spis" wasn't there, but there was a small black stove in the corner, and they both saw that a fireplace could be built there. "I quickly got a bit excited when we were here, and creativity bubbled up inside me," Vibeke says with a smile. "There was a lot that needed to be done, but I saw the possibilities."

Soon after they got the property, they began renovating. They have renovated quite a bit at their former home as well and have great teamwork. They started with the first floor and slept in the TV room next to the kitchen. They traveled there on vacations and holidays to renovate, and Petter also went there alone quite often. In the kitchen, they hired a skilled mason to build the fireplace. The interior is from Ikea, with several unique details that give the kitchen a nostalgic feel.

The coat racks were purchased from a secondhand dealer, and the shelf was made by a carpenter for them. It has been planed and chiseled to look worn and lived in. "We chose surface treatments, like painting the floors and wallpapering the walls," Vibeke says. "We have everything we need here, and now we're just looking forward to exploring the local area. There are many hiking opportunities and a nice swimming spot nearby for summer!"

The glass veranda was also something Vibeke instantly fell in love with when they were here for the viewing. She enjoys styling and setting the table there all year round, and the beautiful panes are the perfect backdrop for photos. Vibeke loves the changes that the different seasons bring and decorates inside in sync with those changes. The colors in nature are something she incorporates, and the glass veranda has already been both red and Christmas-decorated, as well as Easter yellow with spring flowers. "I spend a lot of time outdoors collecting materials I use for decorations, bouquets, wreaths and table settings. And I do spend quite a bit on flowers," she says.

The wallpaper she chose for the attic living room also features many different wildflowers, and Vibeke thinks it's so lovely that the rooms each have different wallpaper and personality. Most of the time, she makes the right choices, but sometimes she must repaint or re-wallpaper. In one of the upstairs bedrooms, they initially chose a wallpaper with birds, which Vibeke felt was a bit too busy. But now she is very happy with it. At the end of the bedroom, they've built wardrobes with doors made from old windows. "I pick up inspiration here and there, but I also like to come up with creative solutions myself," she says.

Vibeke finds it easy to add seasonal touches to her mainly white kitchen. Red towels and a checked apron, a few red mugs, and a trio of pomegranates are just the right touch.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS

The kitchen smells of oranges and Christmas when Vibeke takes out the engraving tool. In December, she decorates oranges with beautiful patterns, using them for decorations and displays. "I find peace when I'm tinkering with creative projects like this," she says.

There's a cozy crackling from the dry birch wood in the fireplace, and the mulled wine is kept warm in a new brass kettle Petter found at a flea market. It's almost time for "fika" (short breaks at 10am and 3pm) in the glass veranda with saffron buns and mulled wine.

"We're just at the beginning of our farmhouse cottage dream," Vibeke says.

"This summer, we're going to make a deck and an outdoor area in the garden. That will be wonderful!"

To see more of Vibeke's home, visit **@vibekedesign** on Instagram.

The kitchen becomes a cozy holiday oasis with a crackling fire, mulled wine on the stovetop, candlelight and warm saffron buns fresh from the oven.

Creative use of wallpaper by Vibeke and wood trim by Petter take a very small room from blah to multi-use and charming.

Vibeke added small trees foraged from their property and lots of candlelight to create a completely cozy space.
She adds texture and interest with an assortment of vintage finds on the peg boards.

MARKET FRESH
Unto you is born this day a Savior, who is Christ the Lord
LUKE 2:11

A Winning, Festive Tablescape

Produced by **Kelly McMaster**
Styled and photographed by **Jennifer Svendsen**

After an open call and voting by our farmhouse community, see how this creative stylist won your hearts and the Tablescape Contest title!

MARKET FRESH
Unto you is born this day a Savior, who is Christ the Lord
LUKE 2:11

For more on how to make this centerpiece yourself, follow this QR code to americanfarmhousestyle.com.

Jennifer Svendsen is a former event planner turned blogger who shares all her best tips and tricks for easy entertaining at home. From seasonal décor to party crafts, free printables, stunning tablescapes, simple recipes and curated menus for any occasion, Jen shares it all on her blog Midwest Life and Style (midwestlifeandstyle.com). Wife and mom of two girls, Jen is a lifelong Nebraskan.

We are delighted to pass along these tips from Jennifer about her whimsical gingerbread themed tablescape:

- When styling my tables, I always start with an inspiration piece. I love a classic red and white Christmas color scheme, so for this table, I was inspired by red and white ticking stripe ribbon. It reminds me of the tiny peppermint candies you see decorated on gingerbread houses during the holidays.
- The DIY Gingerbread snow globe centerpiece was inspired by an image on Pinterest. Their "snow globe" used a real gingerbread house, but I made the project my own by upcycling a thrifted Christmas village and painting it to look like gingerbread. (Note: Follow the QR code on the lefthand page for instructions on how to make one yourself).
- Greenery or flowers (either real, faux or sometimes a mix of both) are usually a staple of my tablescapes. For this table setting, I draped a Christmas garland down the center of my dining room table. To add depth, I mixed in other holiday stems including frosted branches and red berries. I also included battery operated twinkling lights for some extra holiday sparkle.
- I love creating layered place settings for all of my tables. The napkins were made from fabric I found in the craft store. The "napkin ring" holder is just some twine with a gold bell tied around it. The woven twig chargers add a bit of a rustic touch. Classic white plates work great so I can add color for the season or holiday and not spend a lot of money on seasonal-specific dishes.

To see more of Jennifer's creativity, follow **@midwestlifeandstyle** on Instagram.

SEE SOURCES, PAGE 112.

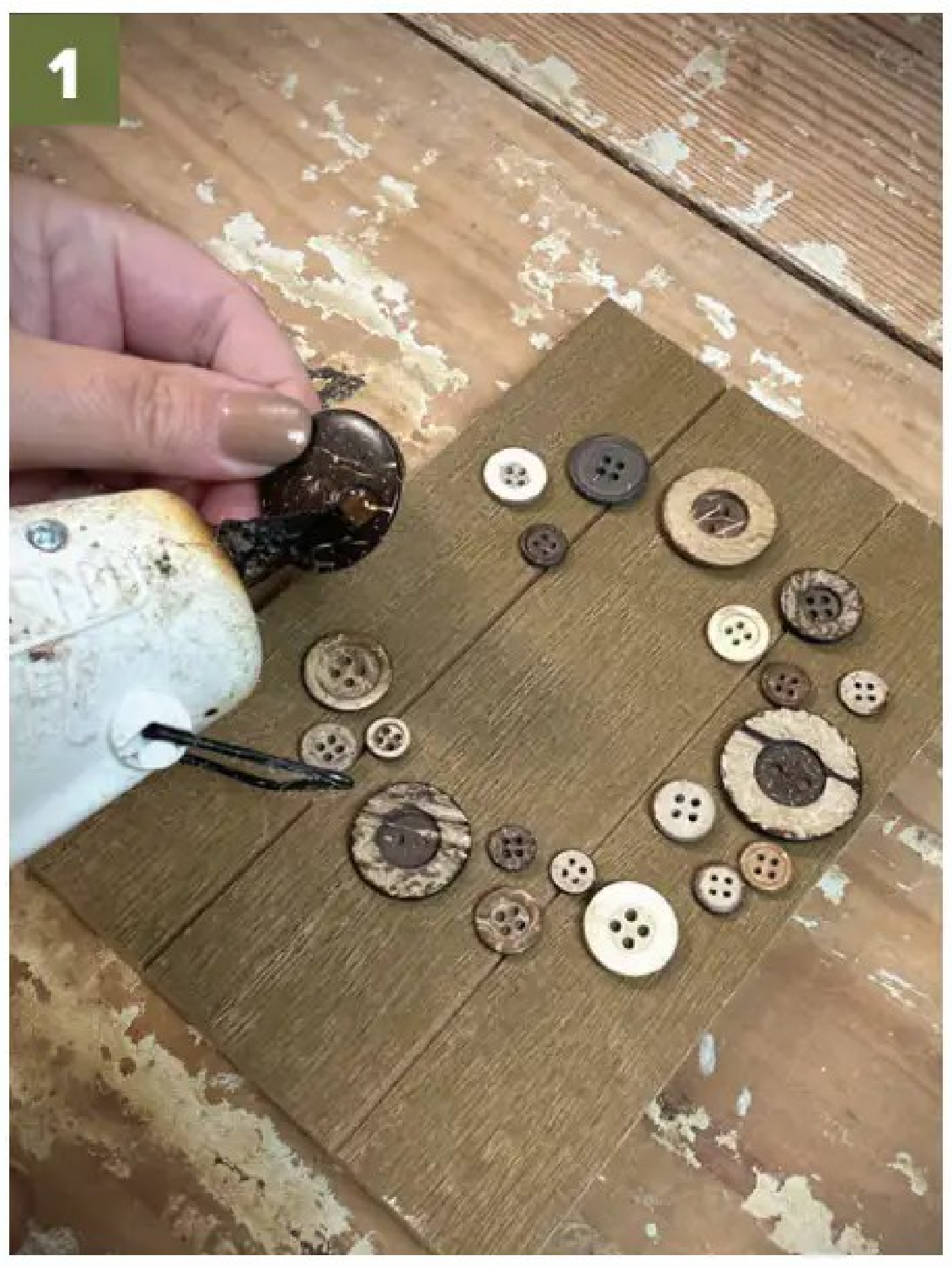
DIY Your Décor

These projects are both fun and festive—
the perfect addition to any space in your holiday home!

Adapted by **Laura Shimko from projects by Summer Hammons of Hammons Nest**
Photography courtesy of **Summer Hammons**

Looking for a way to brighten your home this holiday season? Consider one or all of these delightfully festive DIY projects by the brilliant and creative Summer Hammons of Hammons Nest (hammonsnest.com and @hammonsnest). Just make sure you've got a handy cup of Christmas cocoa nearby to enjoy while you work!

Button Wreath Shelf Sitter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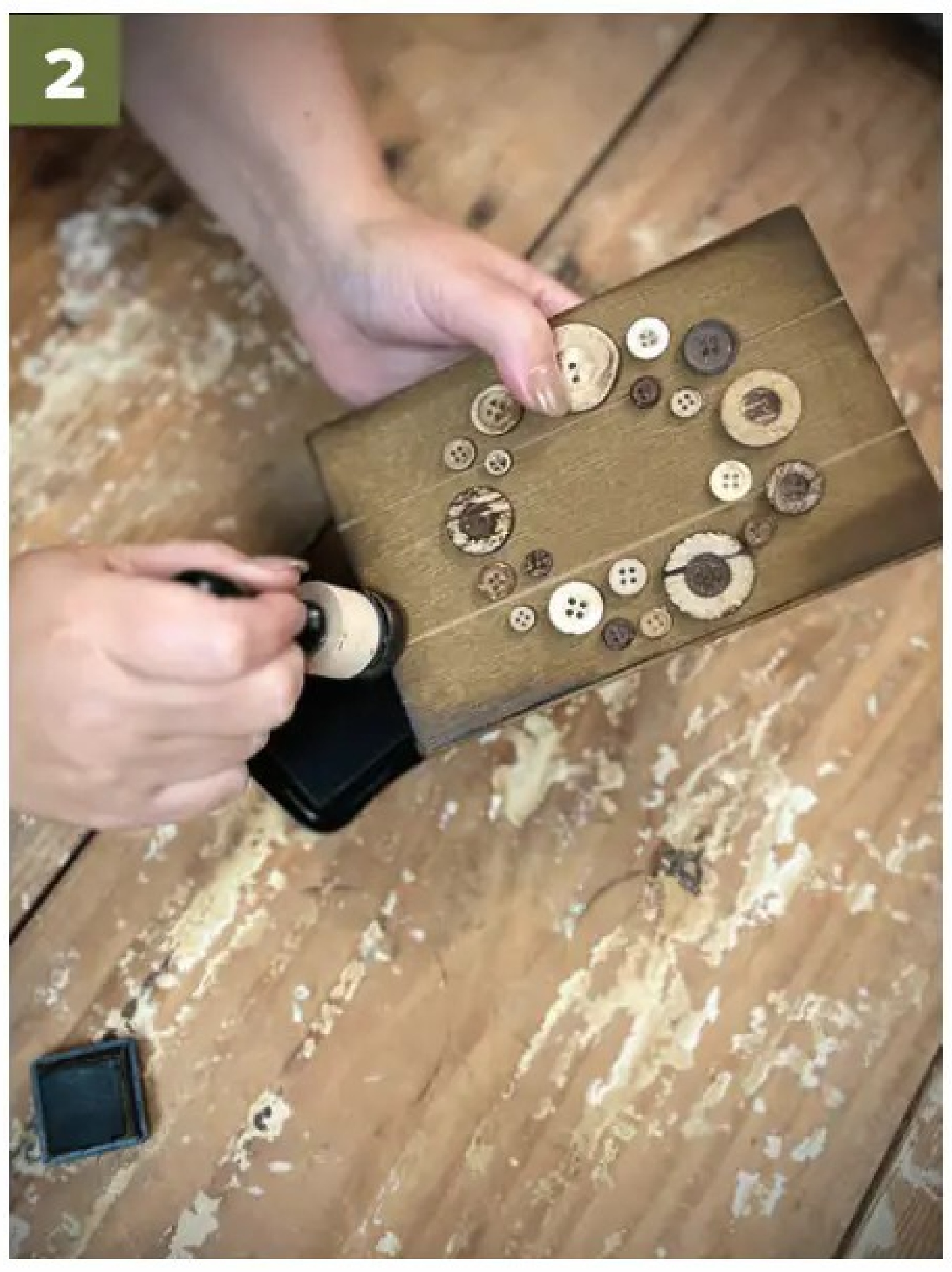
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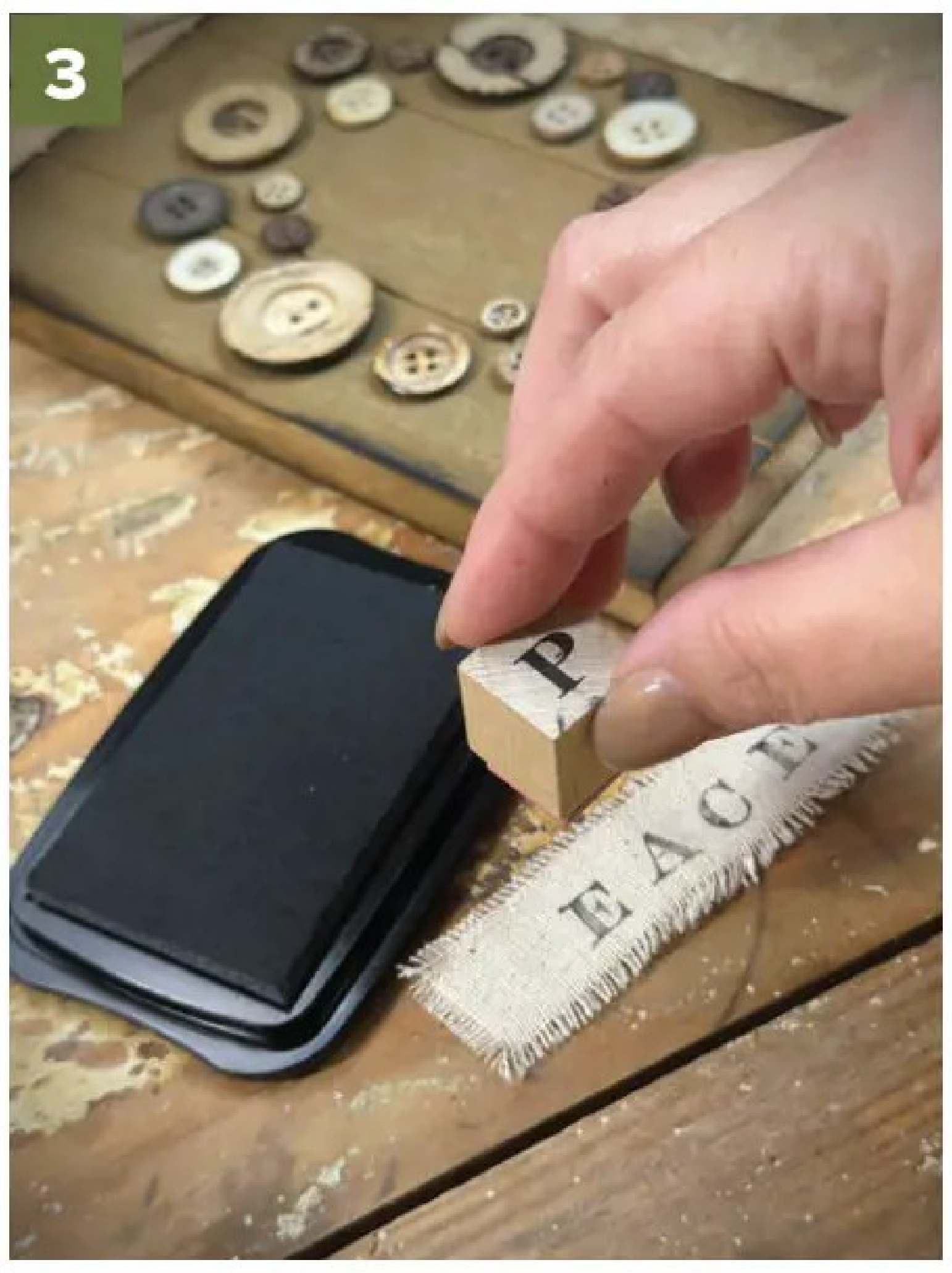
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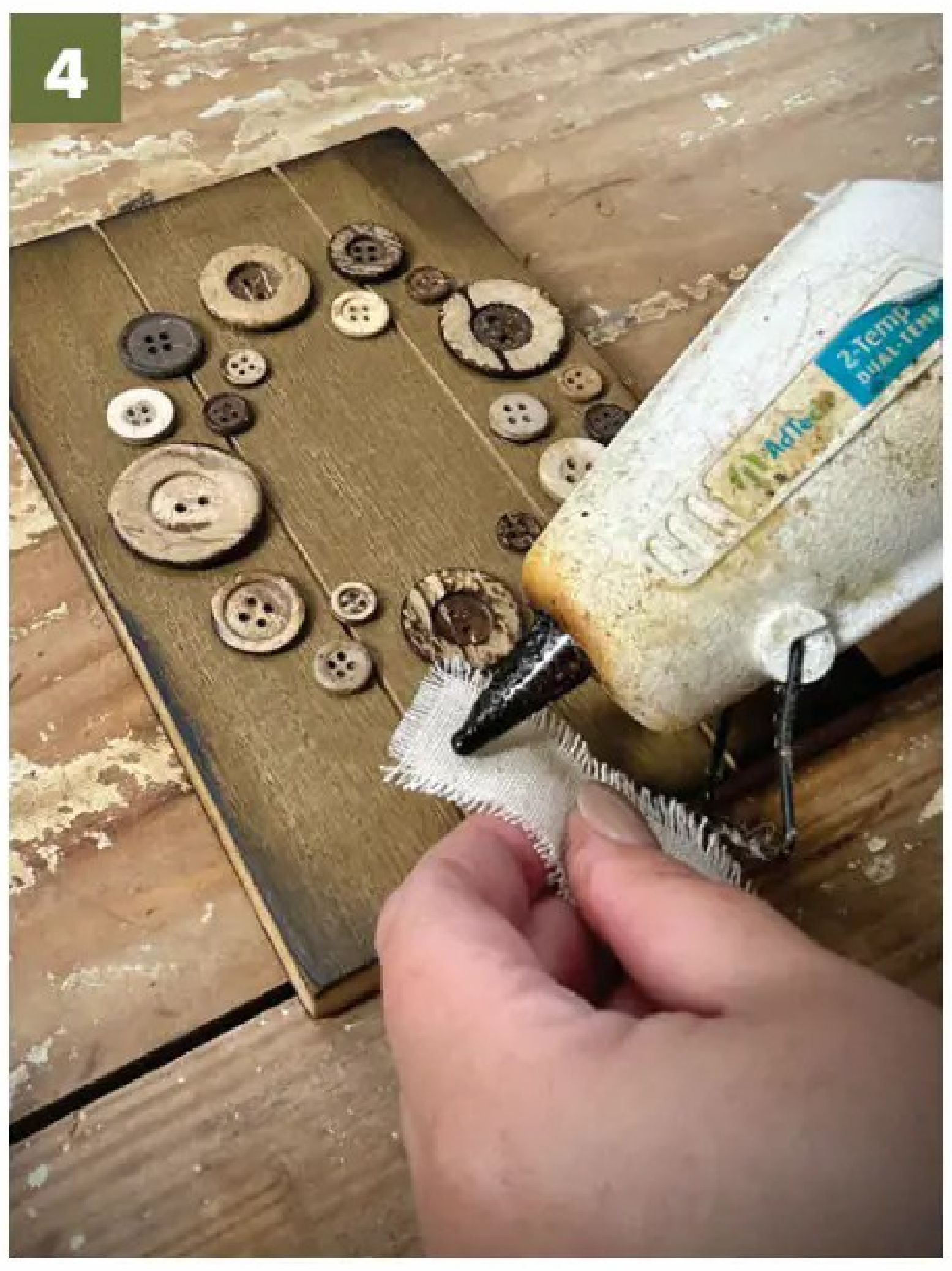
WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Wood surface
- Wooden buttons
- Muslin fabric
- Burlap ribbon
- Jute twine
- Distressing ink
- Rubber stamps
- Greenery
- 2 rusty bells
- Hot glue gun
- Scissors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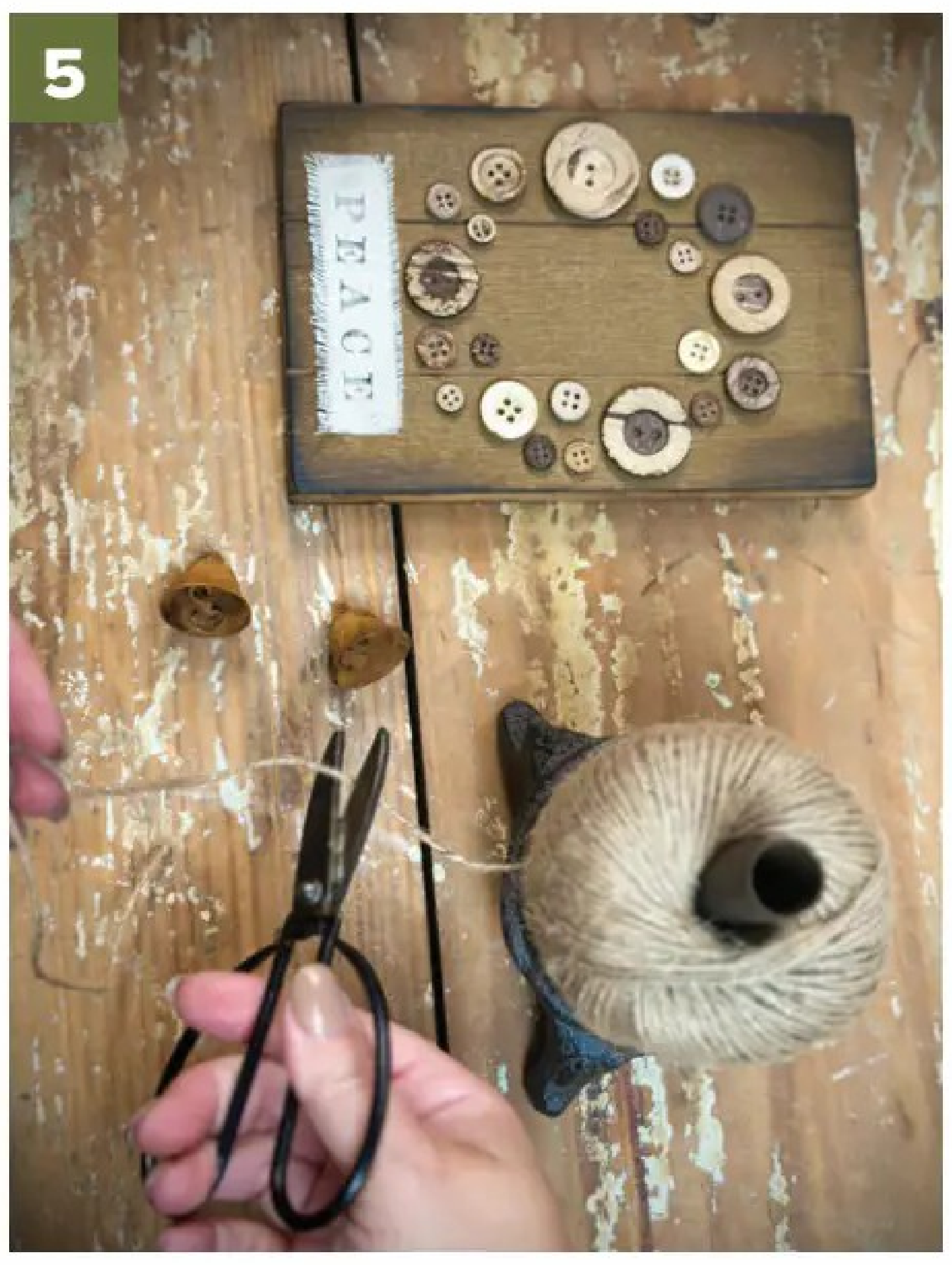
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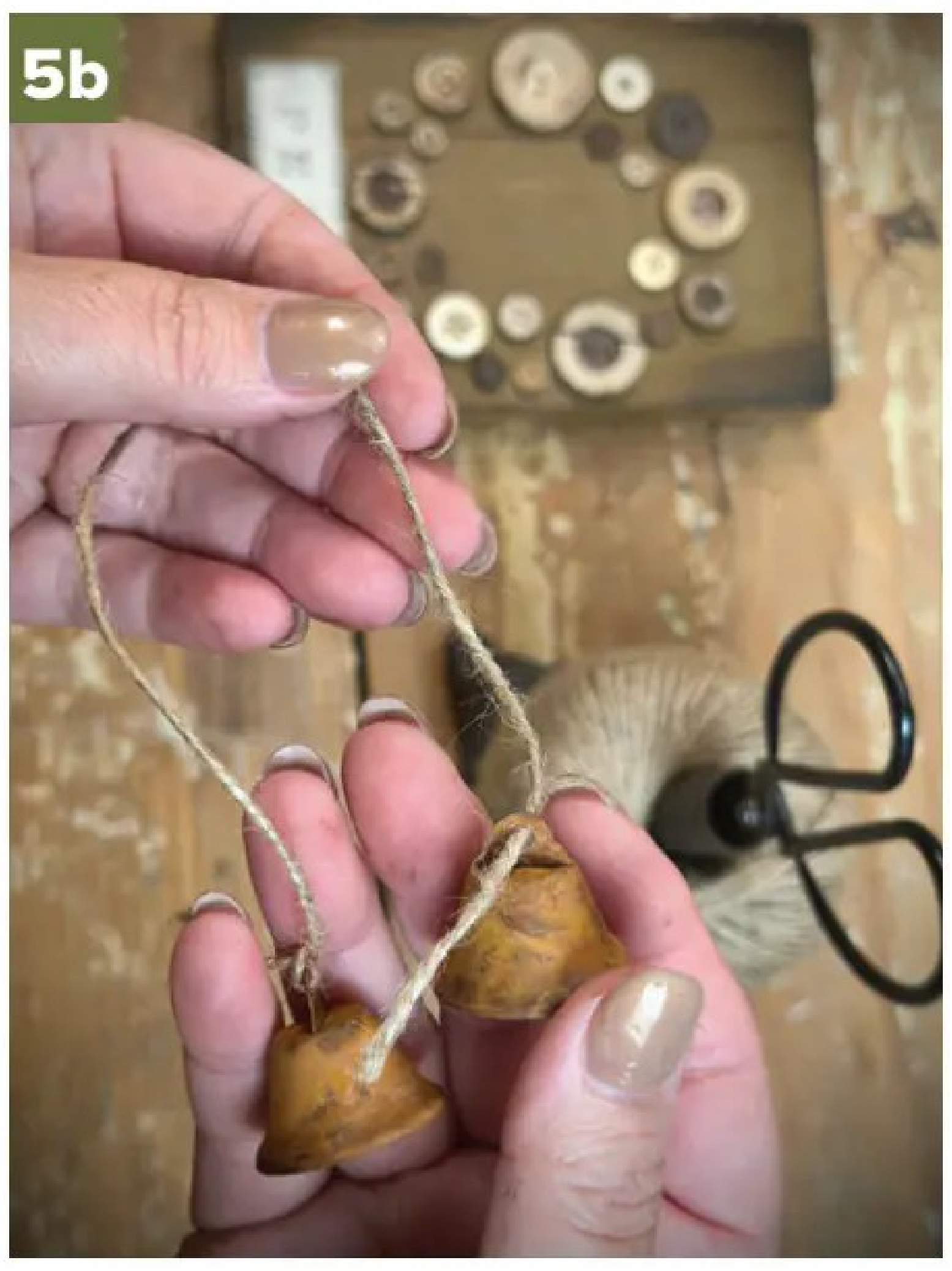
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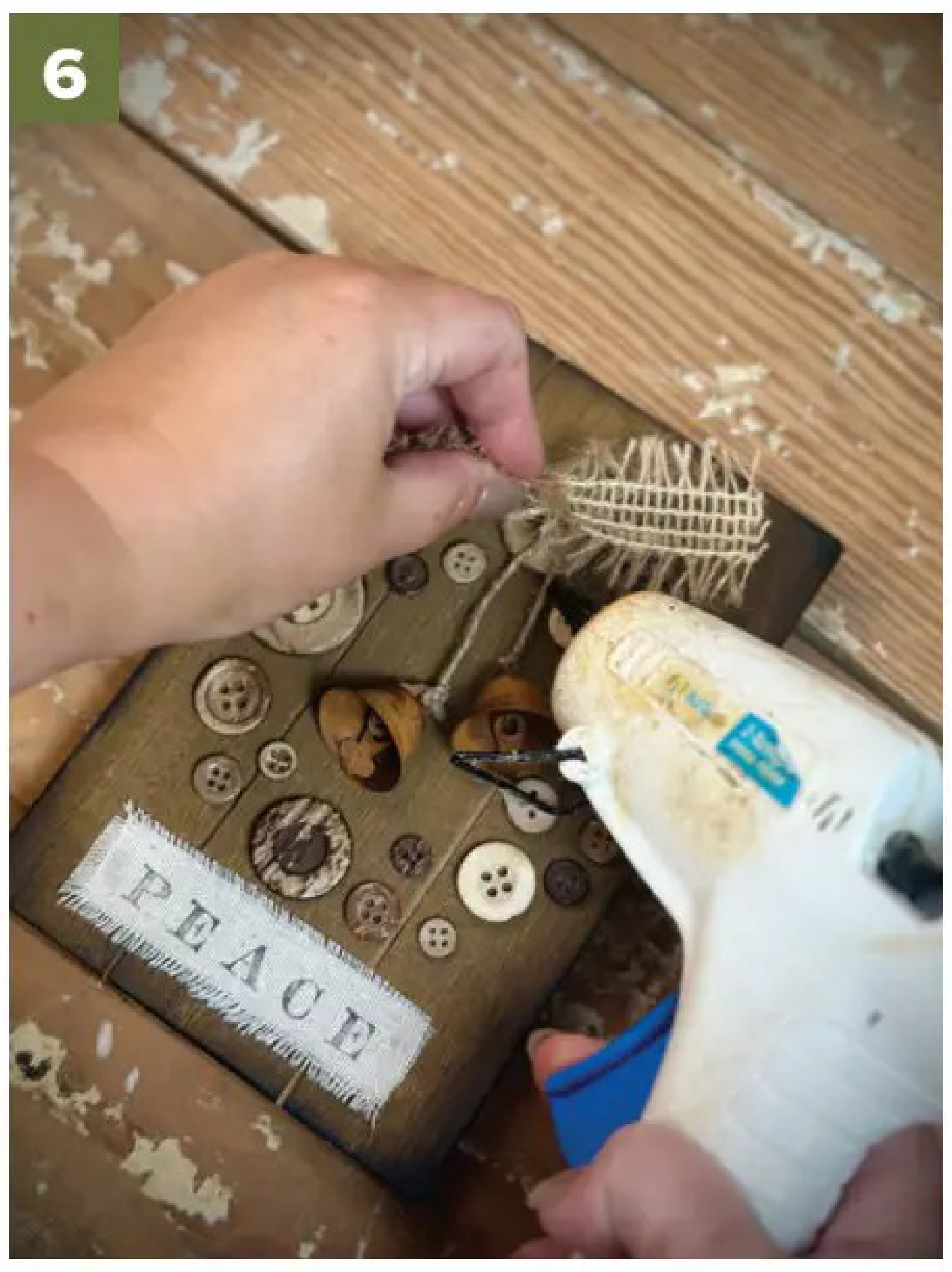
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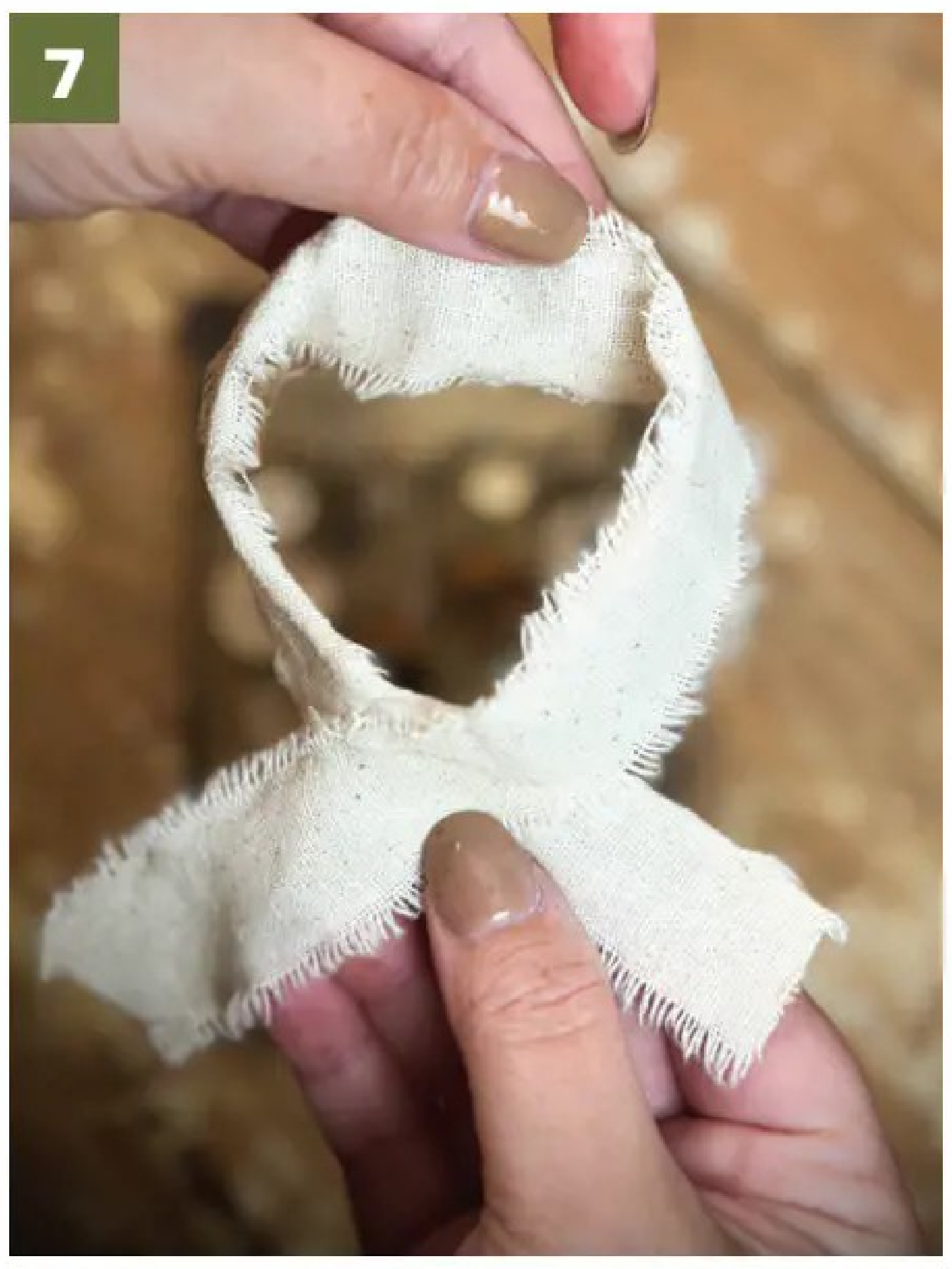
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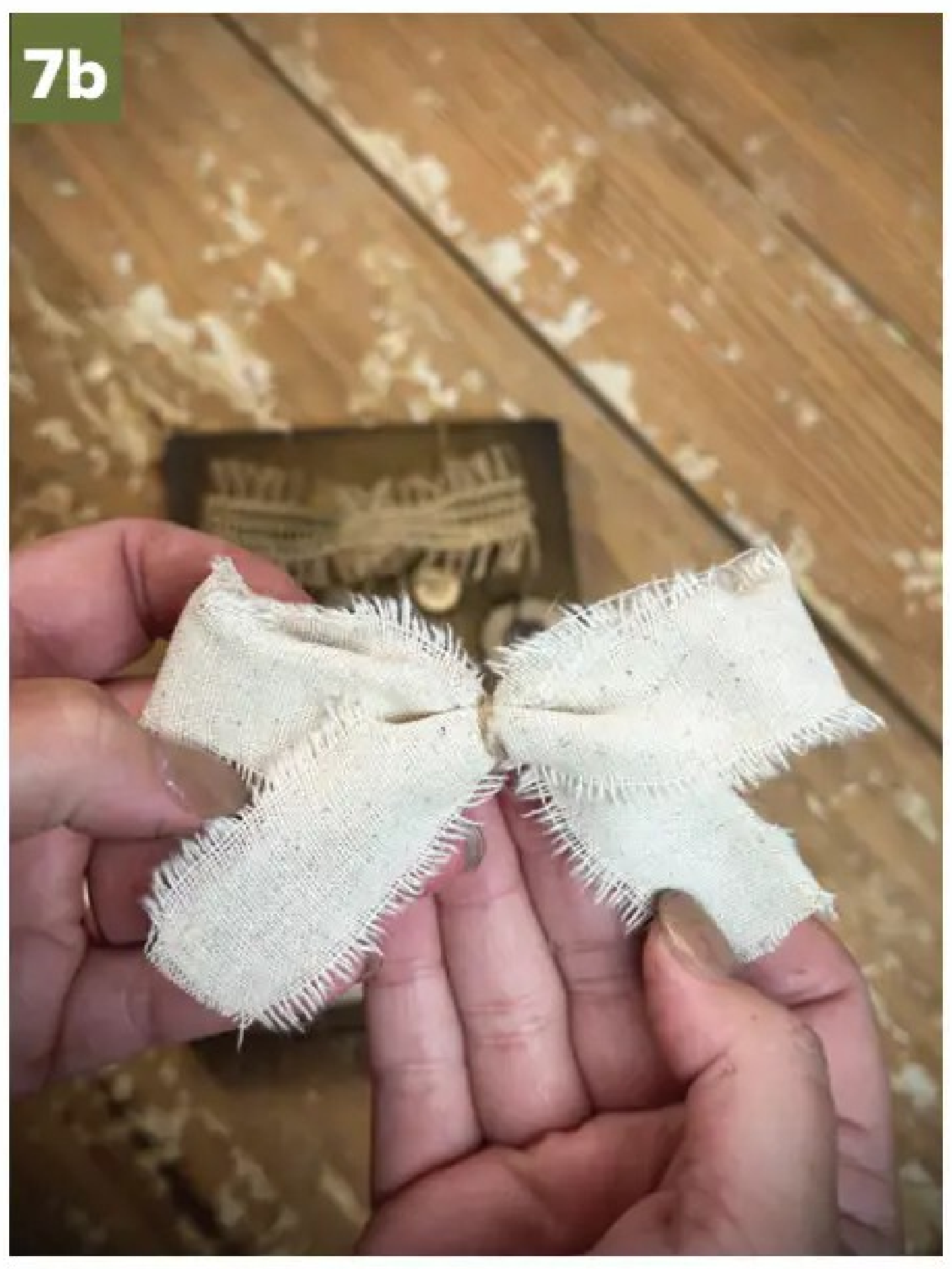
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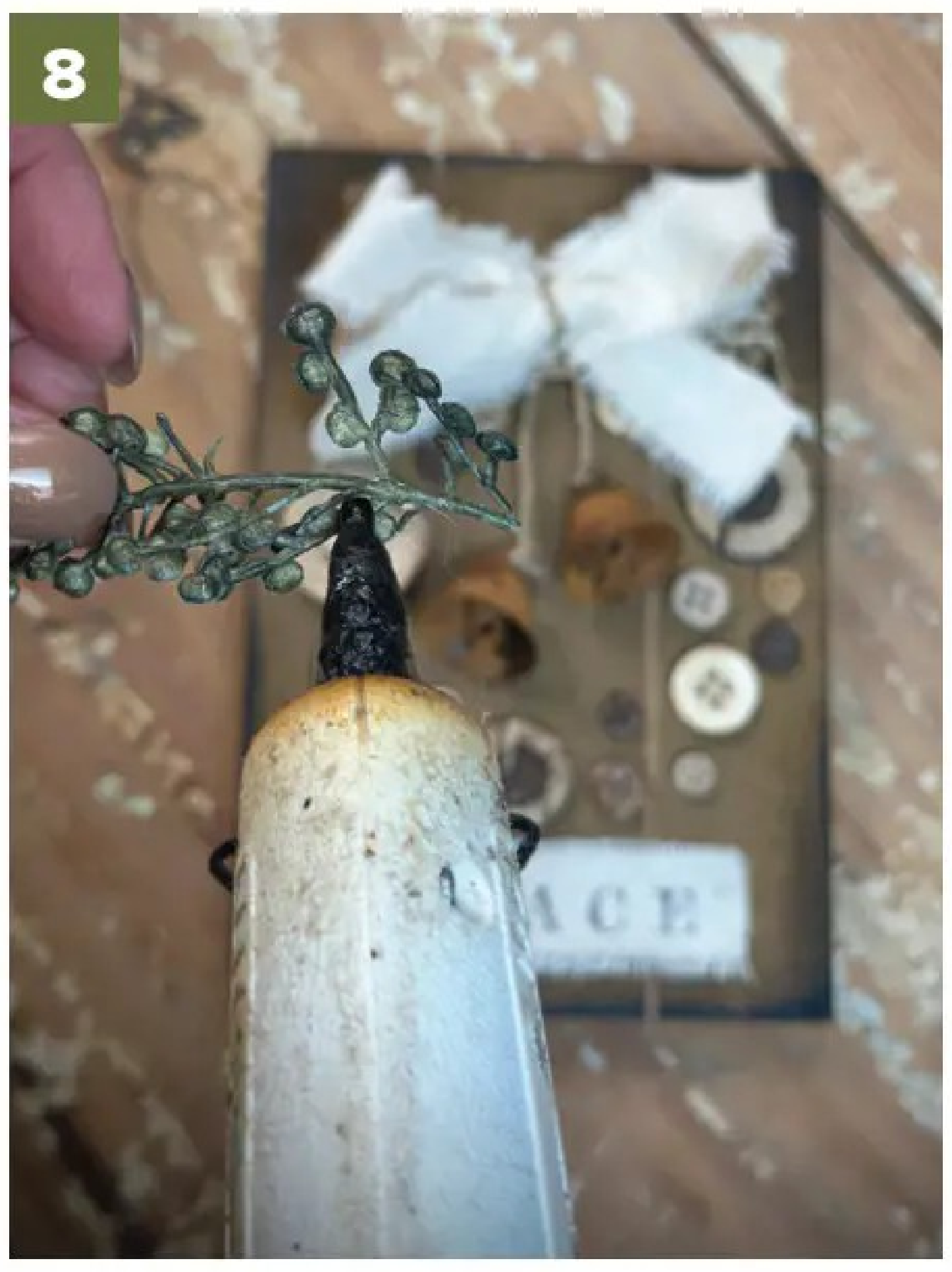
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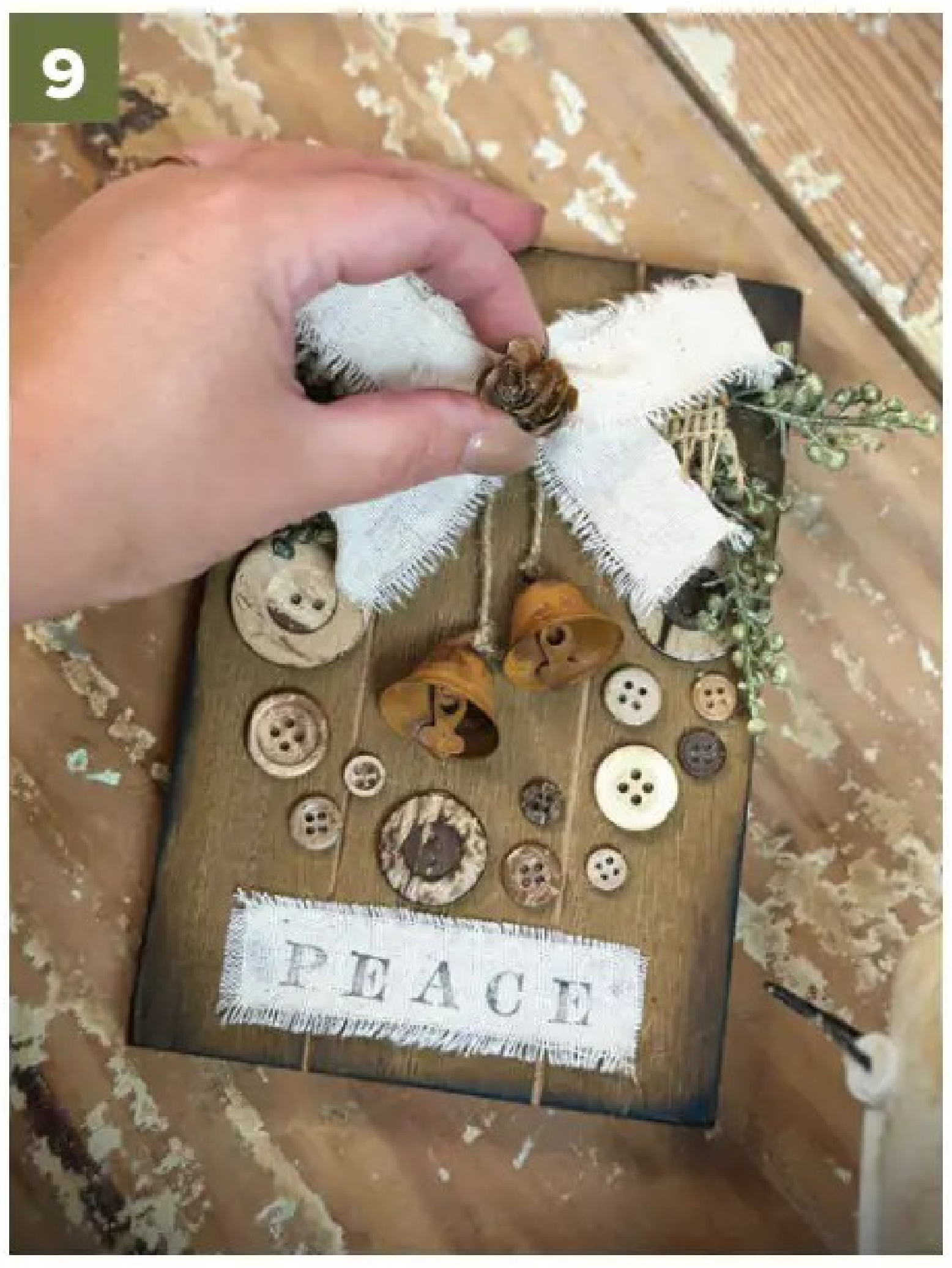
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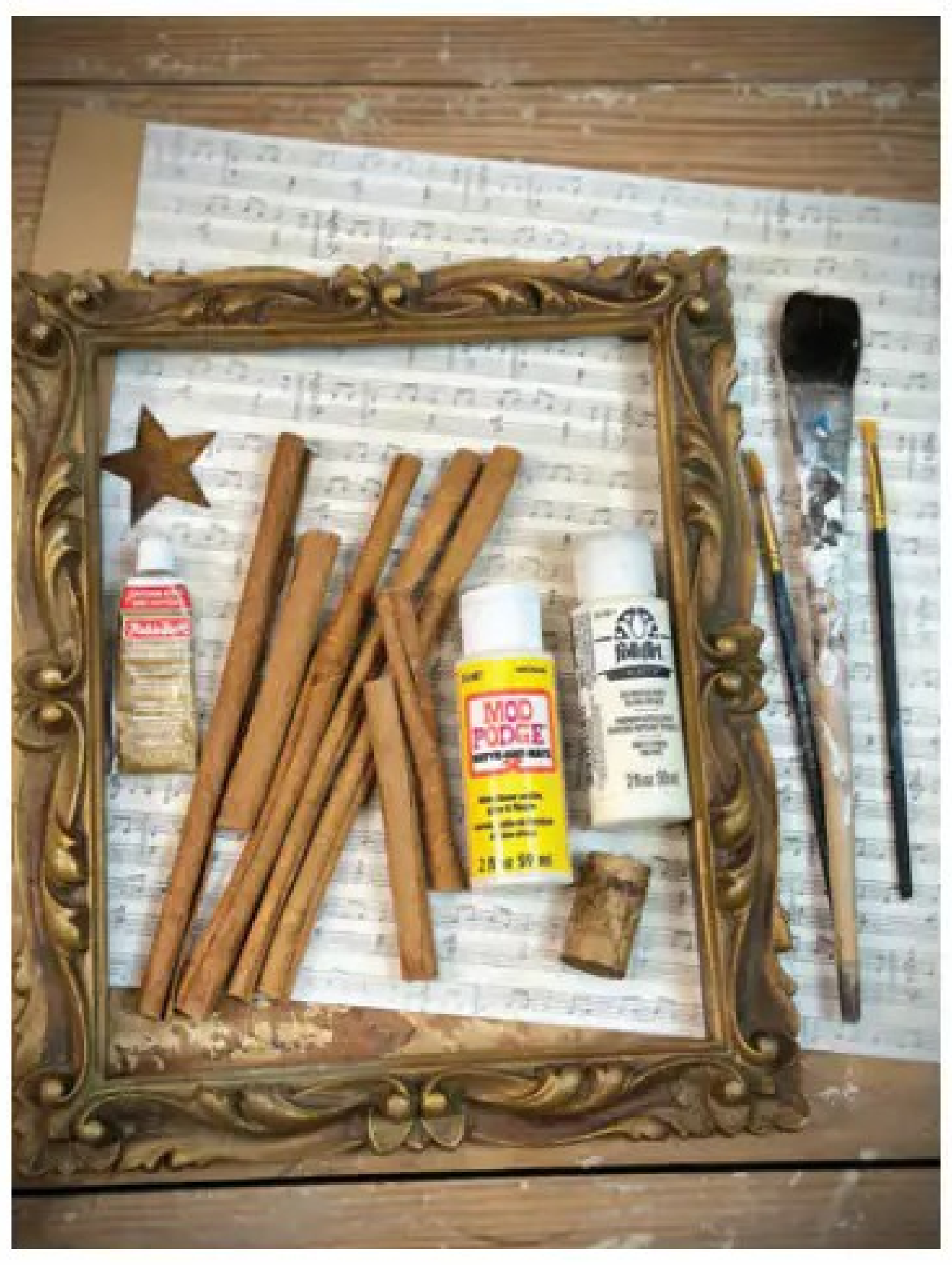
WHAT YOU'LL DO:

1. Choose a wooden surface to be the background for your button wreath and gather the buttons you'll want for your collage. Practice a few different layouts to see which one you like the best, making sure to leave space for the label at the bottom. Once you've got your layout, use the hot glue to attach each button.
2. Use your distressing ink to add shade to the edges of the surface.
3. Get your ink, stamps and muslin to create your label. You can stamp any word or words you'd like!
4. Attach your label to the bottom of the wood surface with hot glue and let dry.
5. Get your rusty bells and string them onto the jute twine, then hot glue onto the top of the button wreath.
6. Layer a piece of burlap over the string of bells at the top with hot glue.
7. Use the muslin to make a bow and hot glue to the center of the burlap.
8. Hot glue bits of greenery behind the bow.
9. Place your mini pinecone at the center of the bow and secure with hot glue.

Framed Cinnamon Stick Christmas Tree



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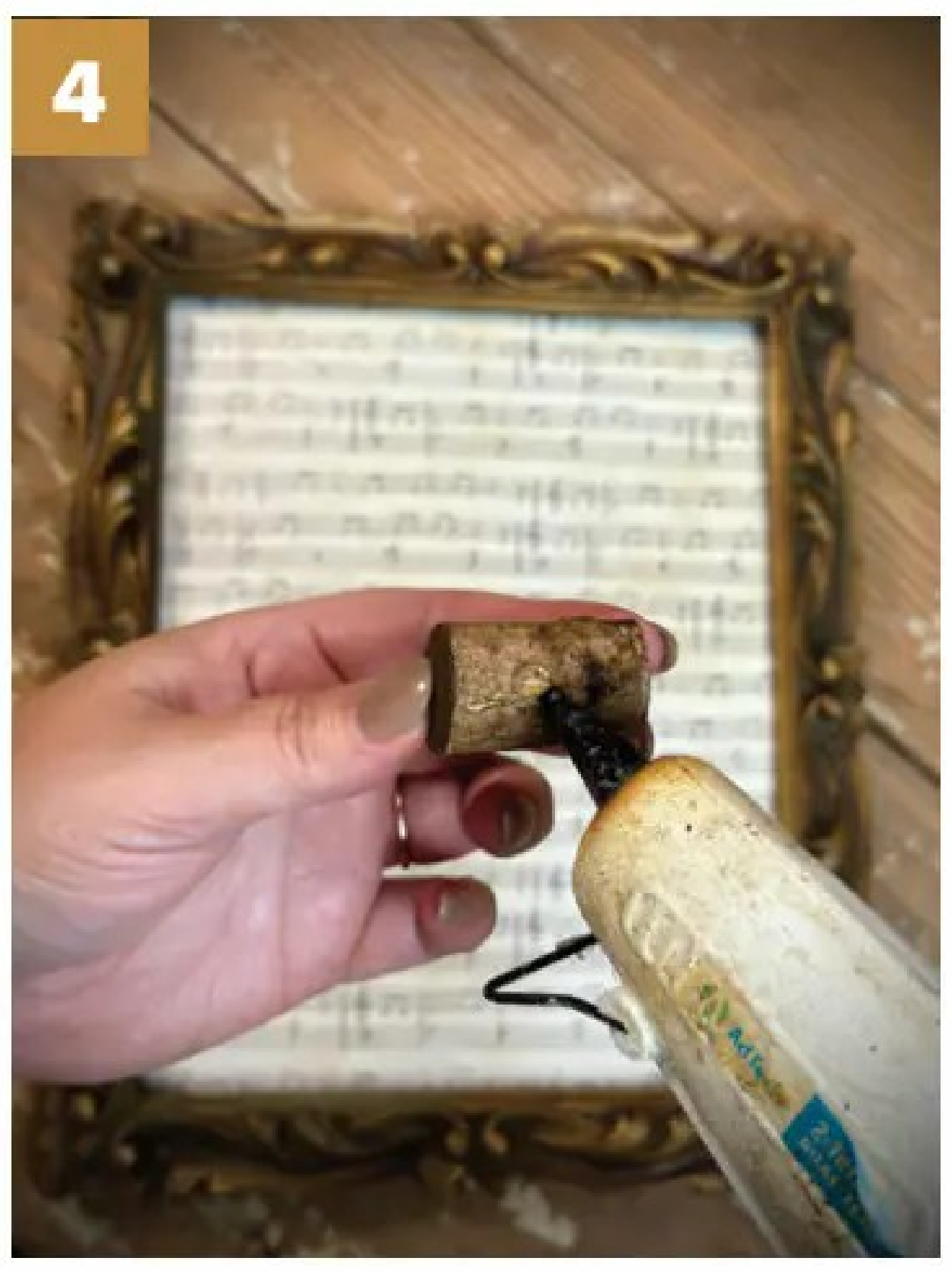
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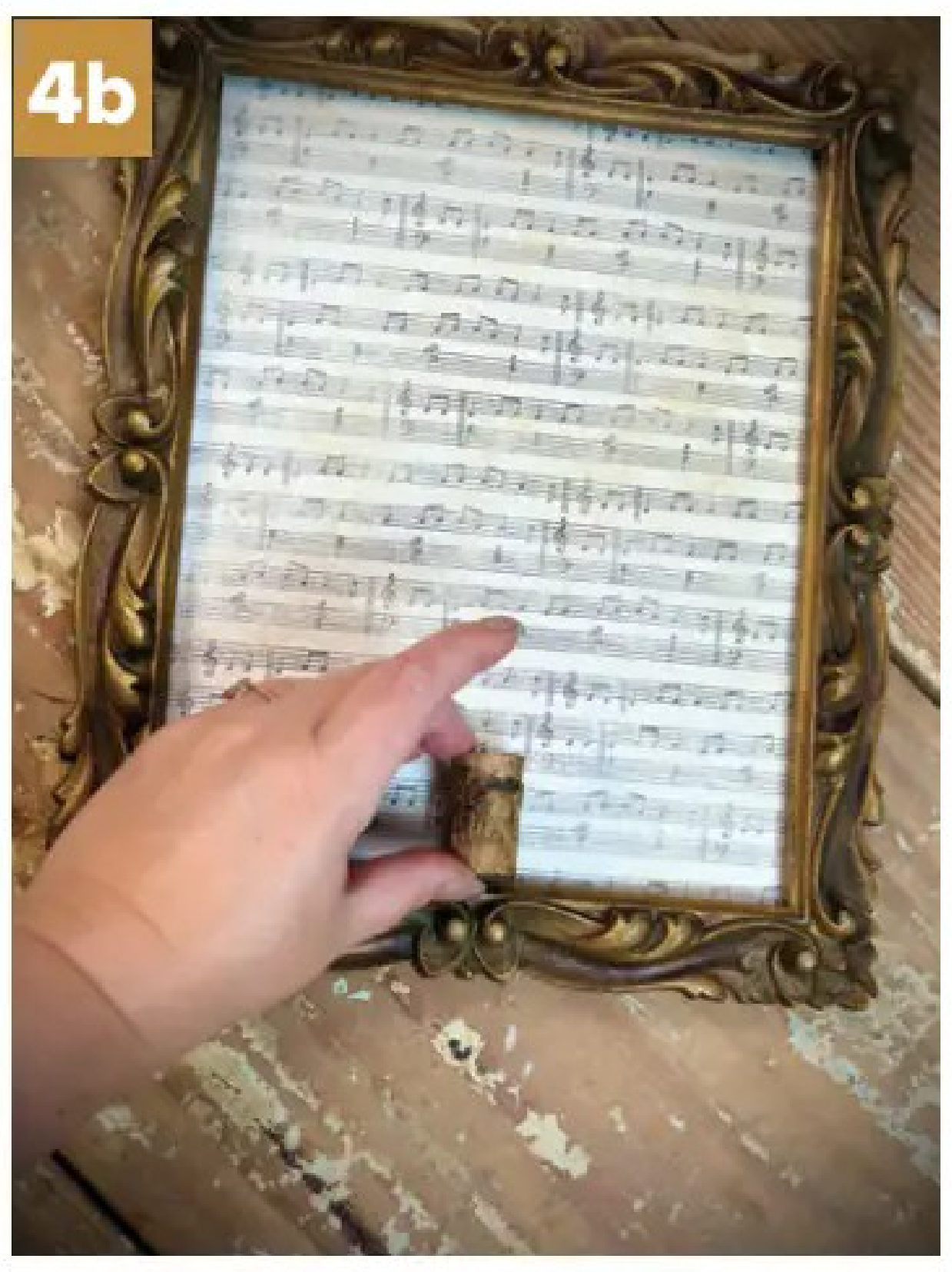
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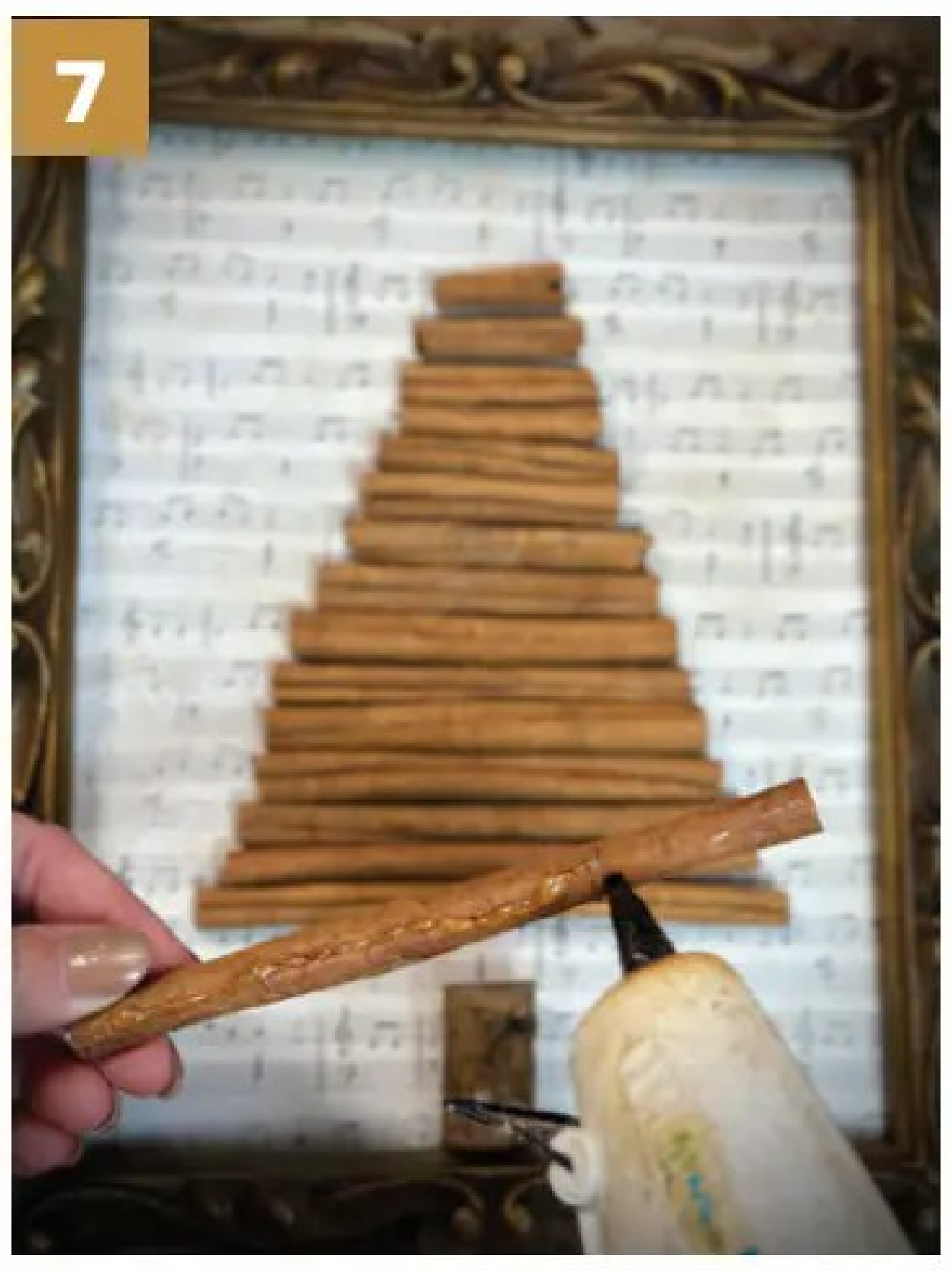
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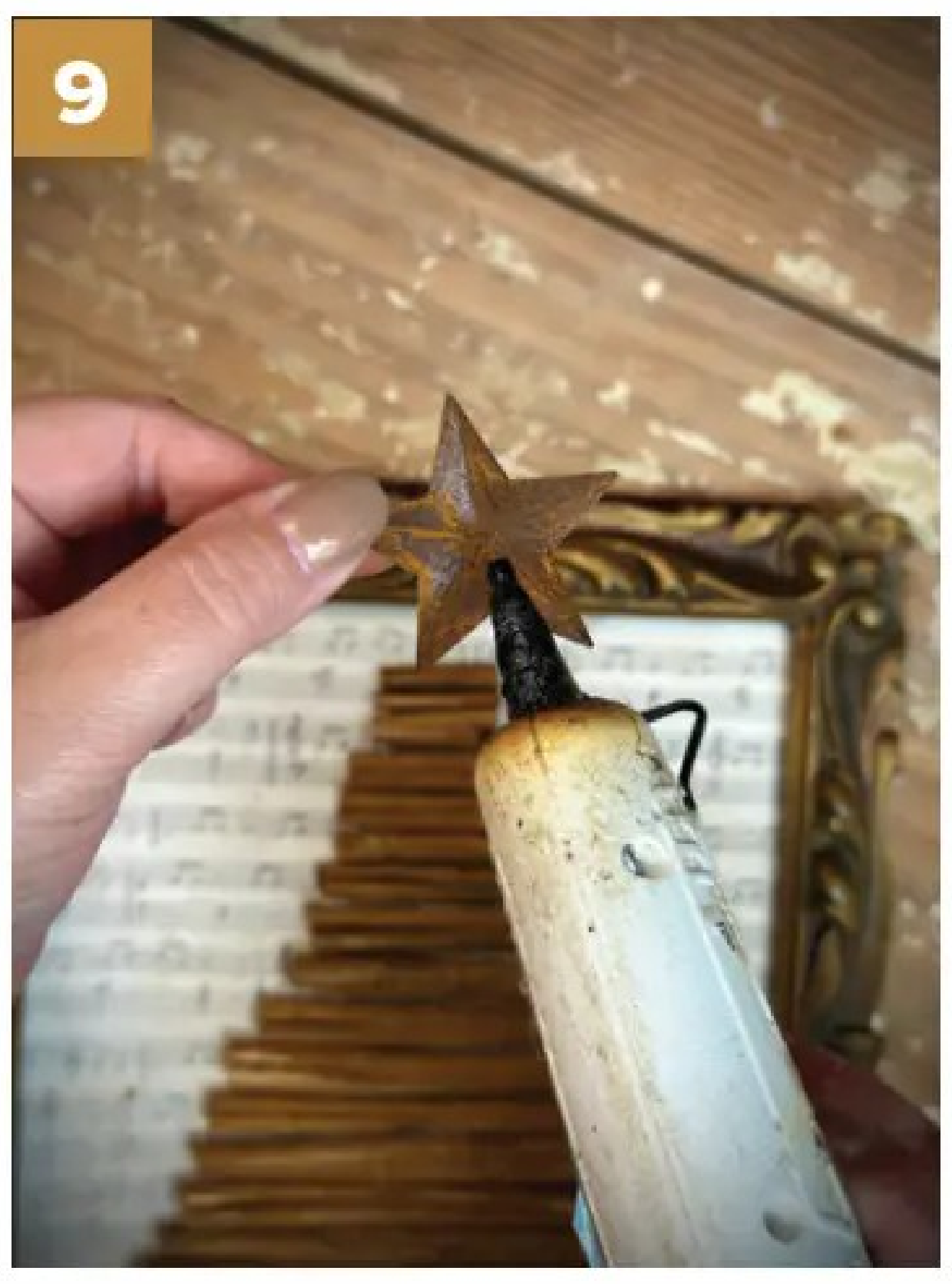
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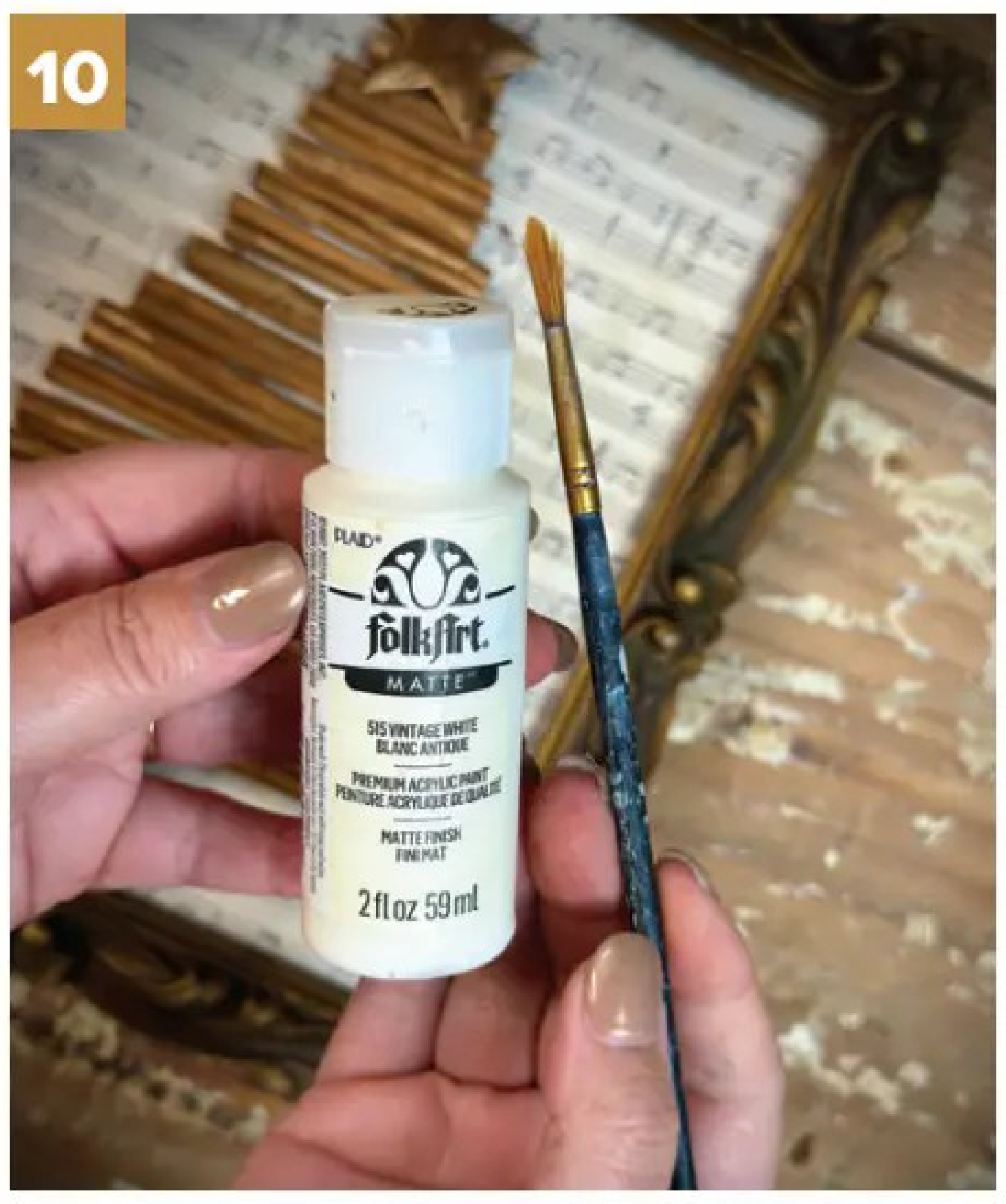
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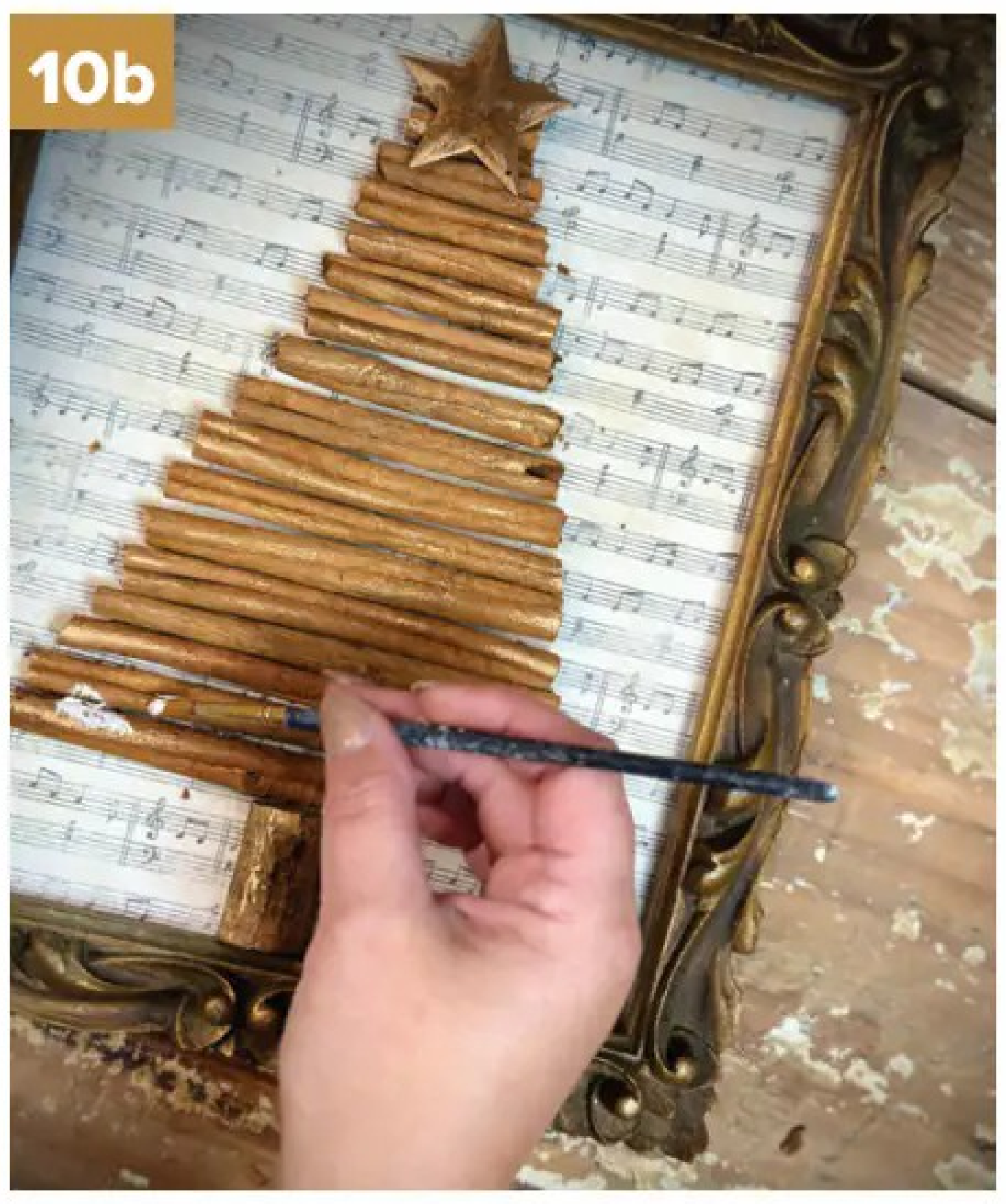
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WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

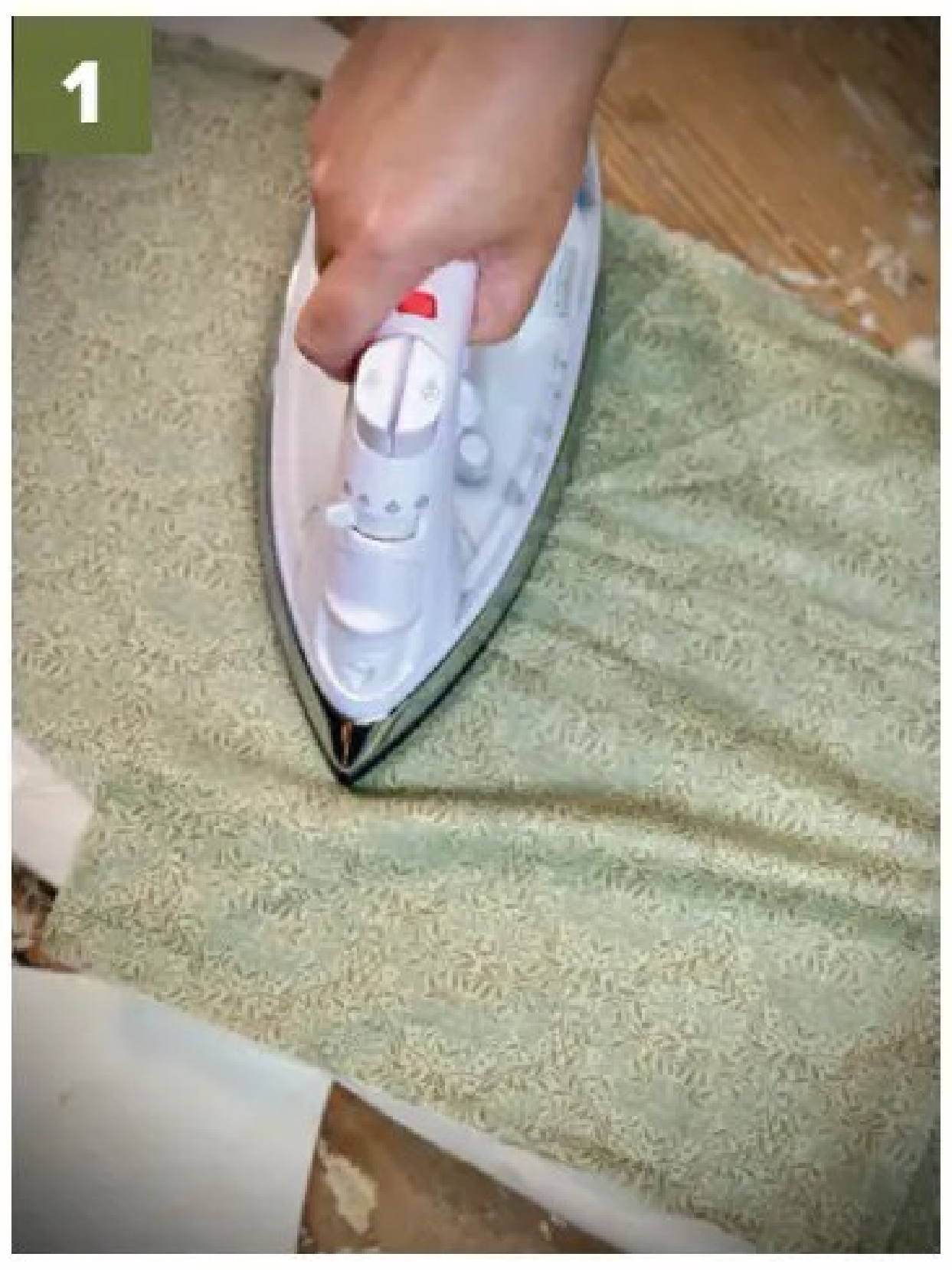
- 8x10 gold picture frame
- 8x10 piece of cardboard
- 8x10 piece of music on cardstock
- Crafting cinnamon sticks
- Wood piece for tree trunk
- Mod Podge decoupage glue
- Cream matte acrylic craft paint
- Rub'nBuff (Antique Gold)
- Rubber glove to apply Rub'nBuff
- Rusty star
- Paintbrushes
- Hot glue gun
- Scissors

WHAT YOU'LL DO:

1. Measure your frame and cut the cardstock so that it will fit.
2. Apply a generous coat of Mod Podge with a paintbrush to the cardboard and attach the music cardstock.
3. Place cardboard into the frame.
4. Attach the wood piece for the tree stem with a bit of hot glue.
5. Cut the cinnamon sticks carefully to create a triangle tree shape. You'll need to figure out first how long the bottom piece will be, then cut each piece above progressively shorter in order to create a tree shape.
6. Lay out your tree and then attach with hot glue.
7. After all your cinnamon sticks are attached, get your rubber glove and paintbrush and apply a bit of antique gold Rub'nBuff to the edges of the cinnamon sticks, trunk and rusty star.
8. Attach your rusty star to the top of the tree with hot glue.
9. Dab some white paint on the cinnamon sticks, trunk and star to put some "snow" on your tree.

peace
on
EARTH

No-Sew Fabric Pocket Christmas Tree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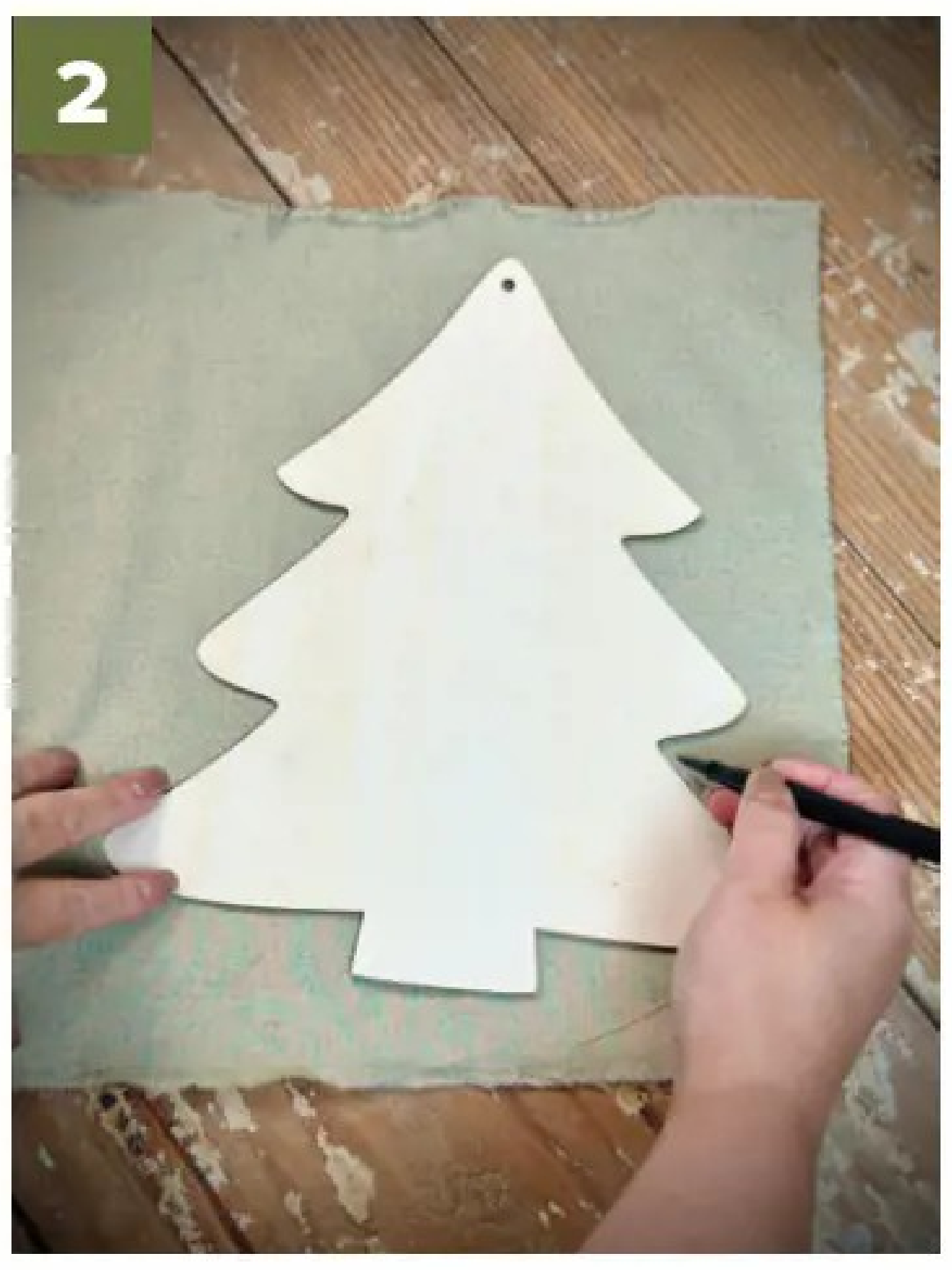
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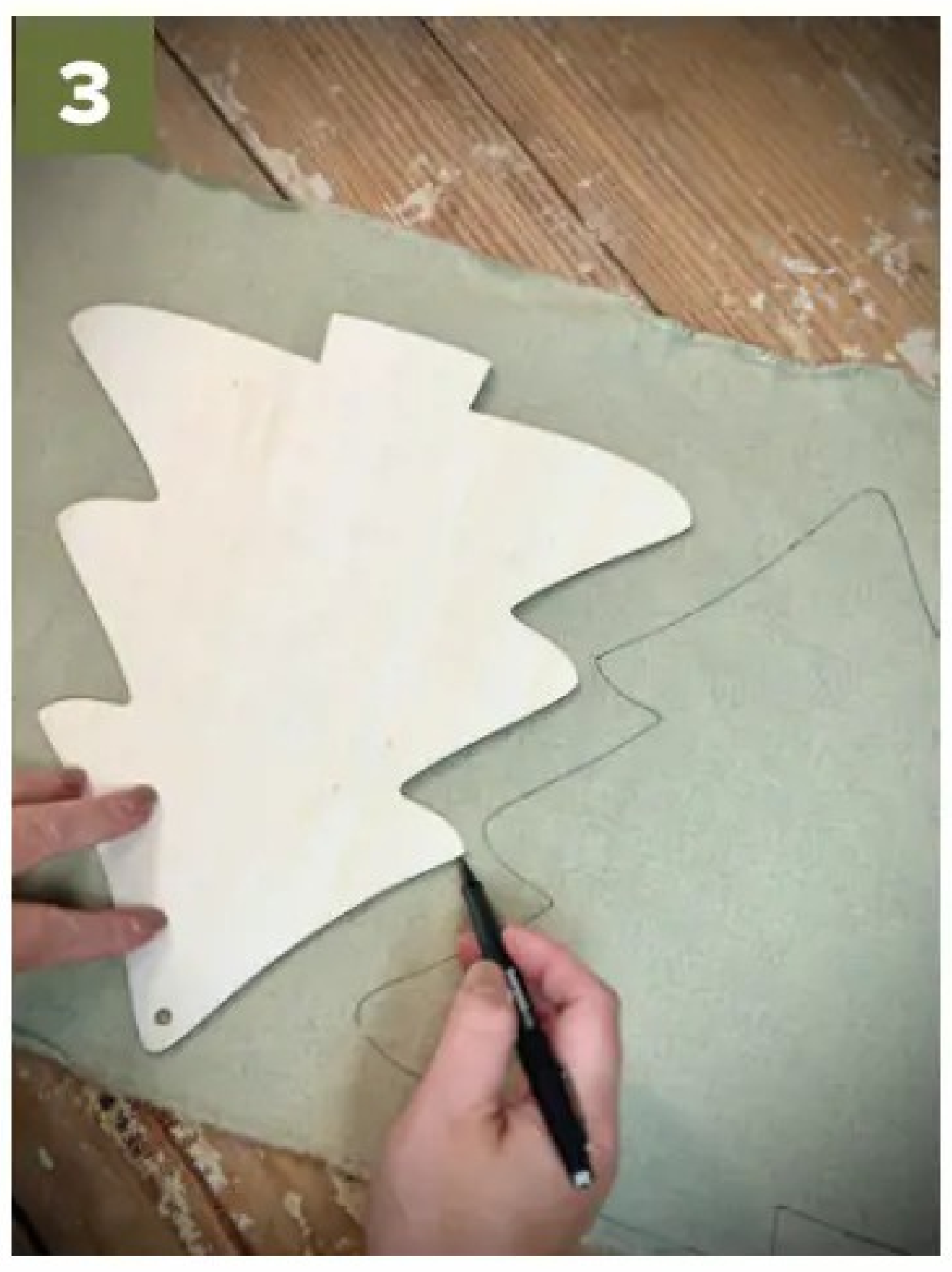
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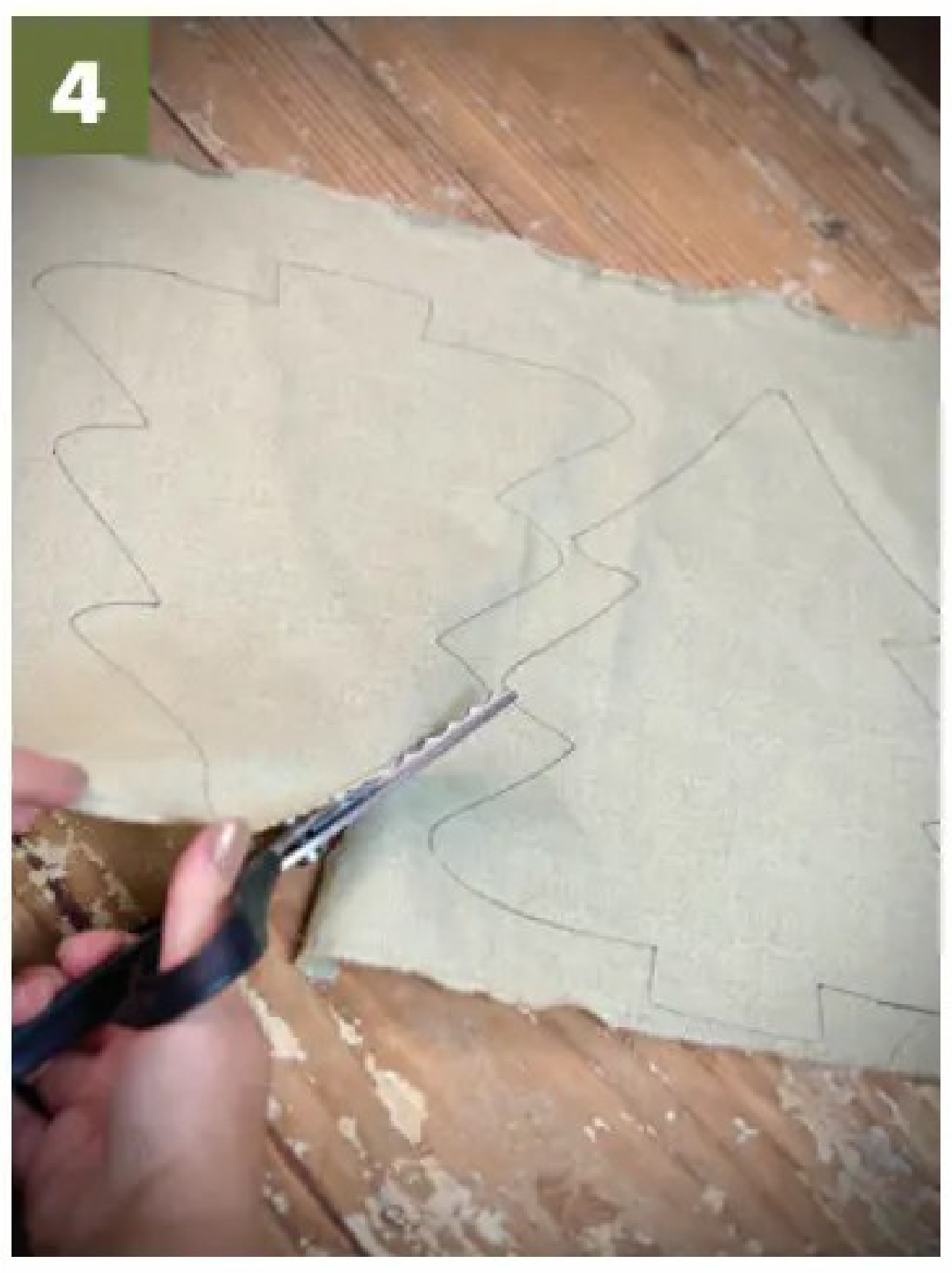
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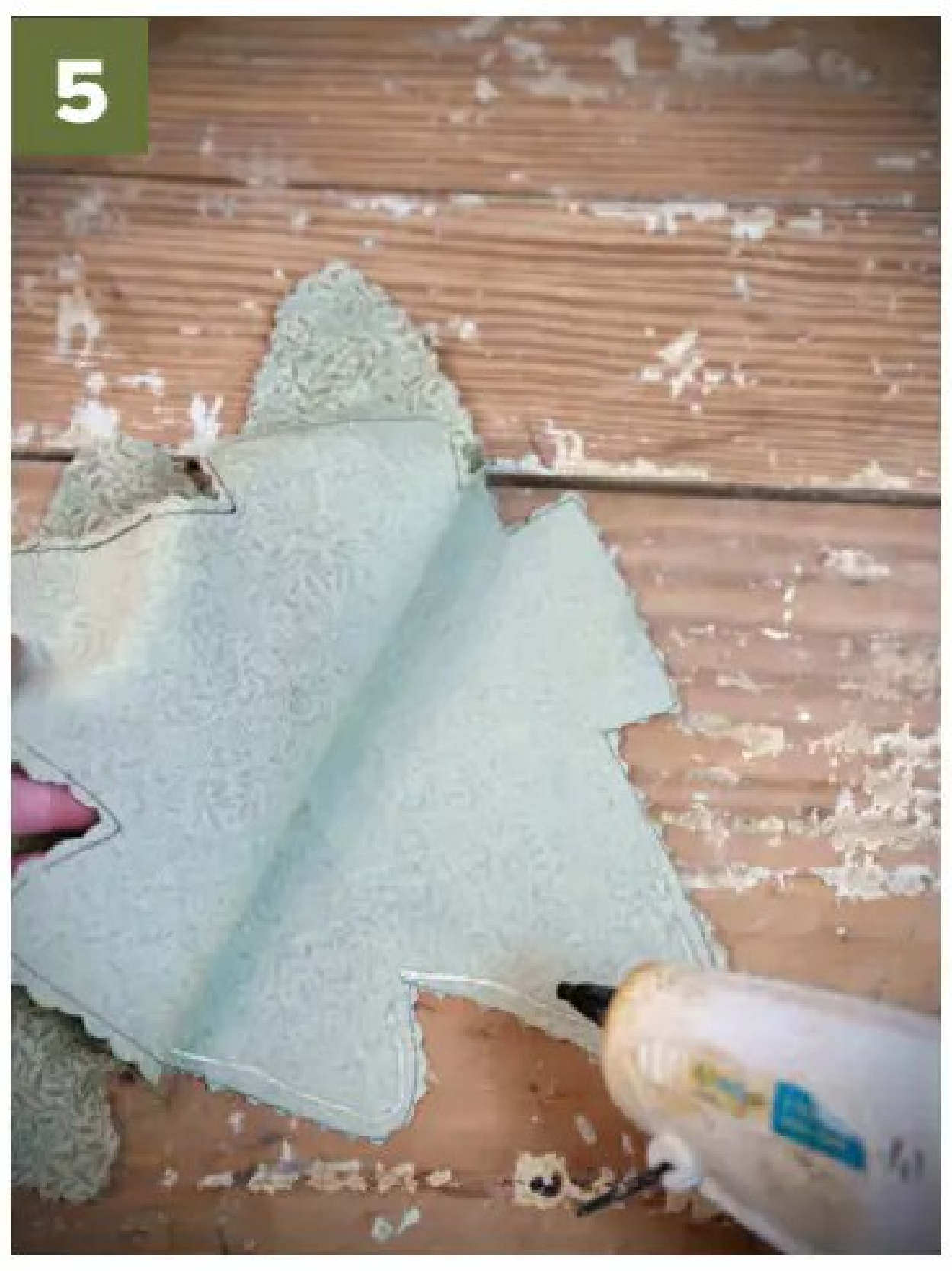
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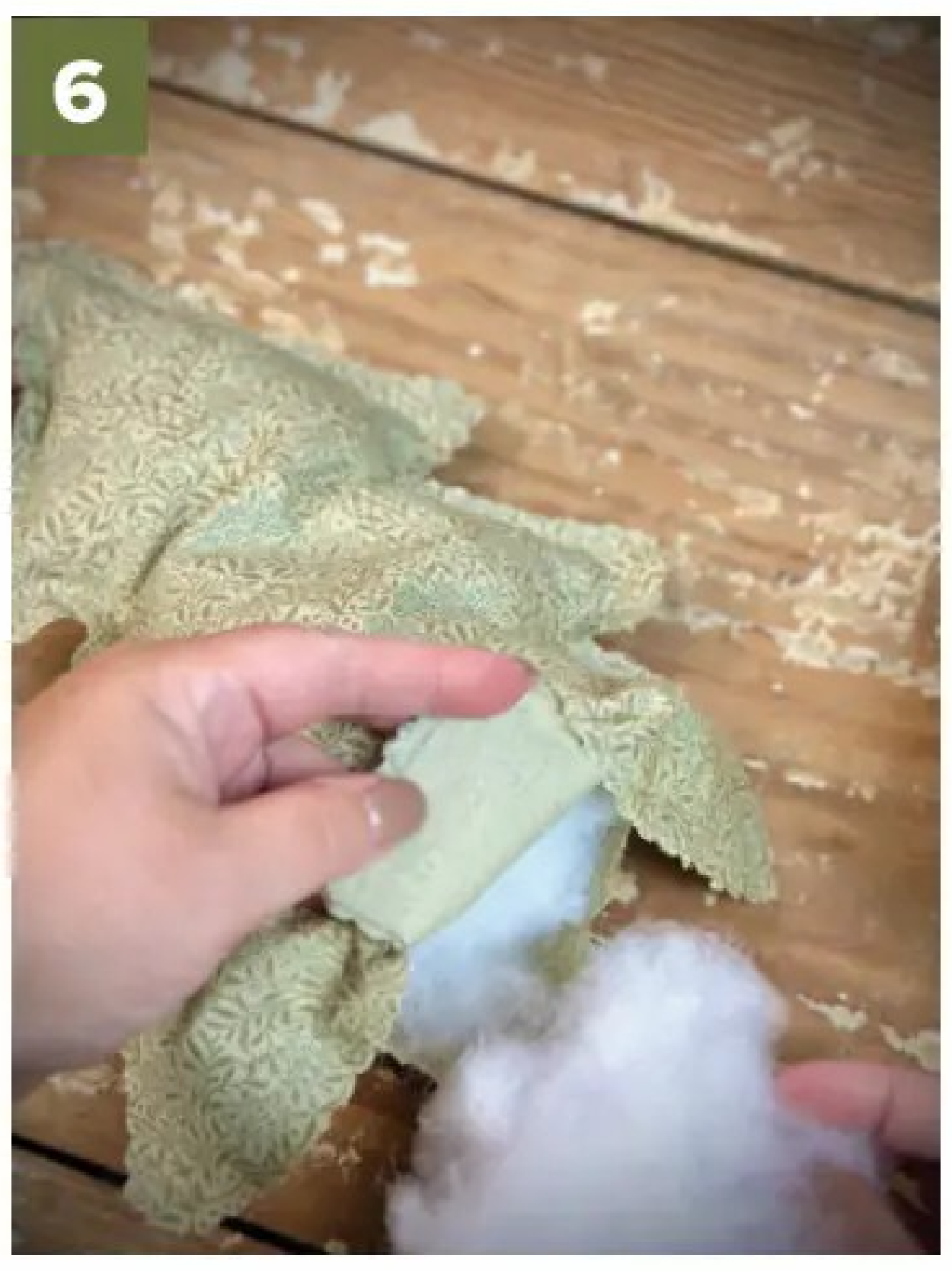
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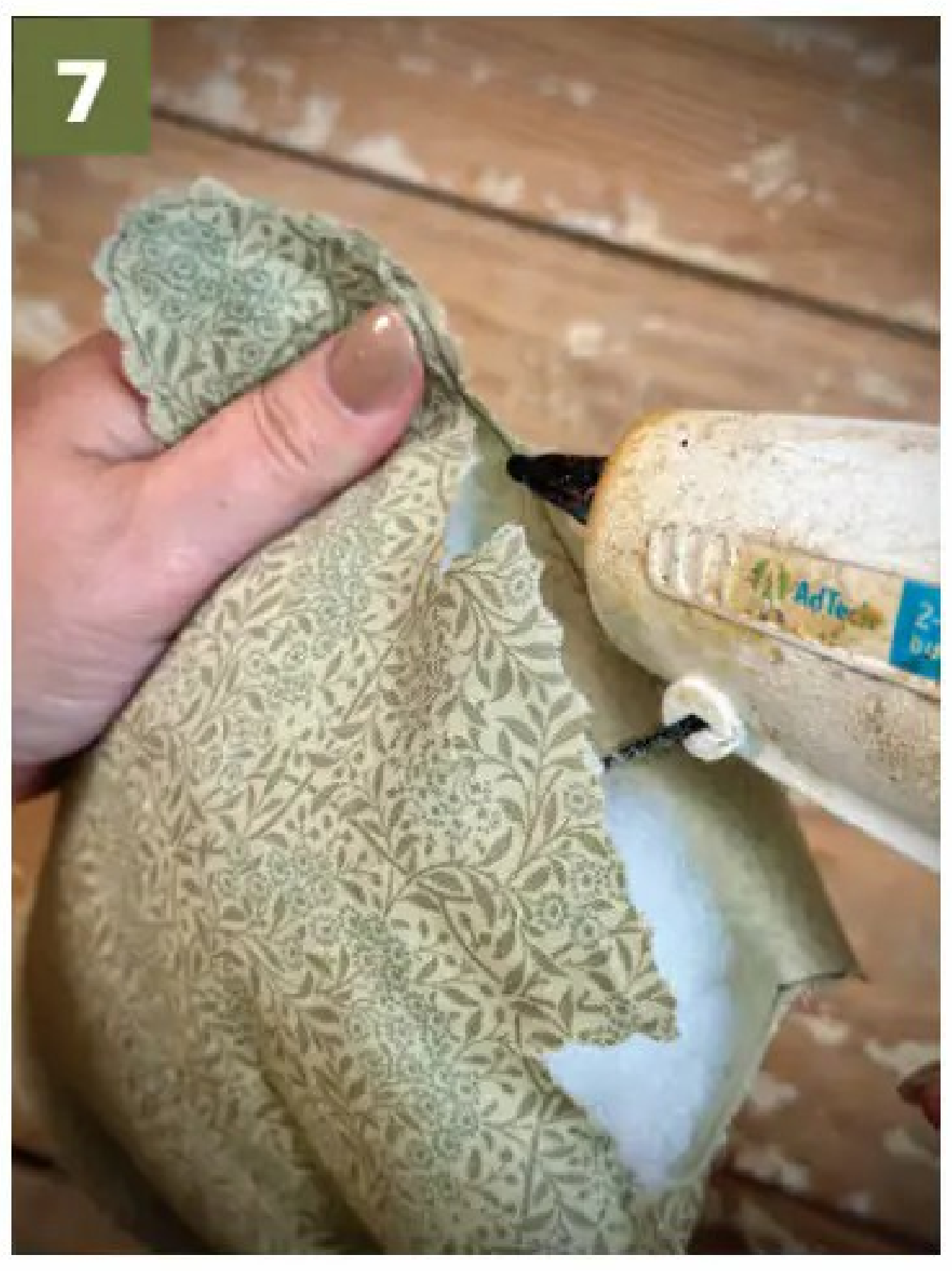
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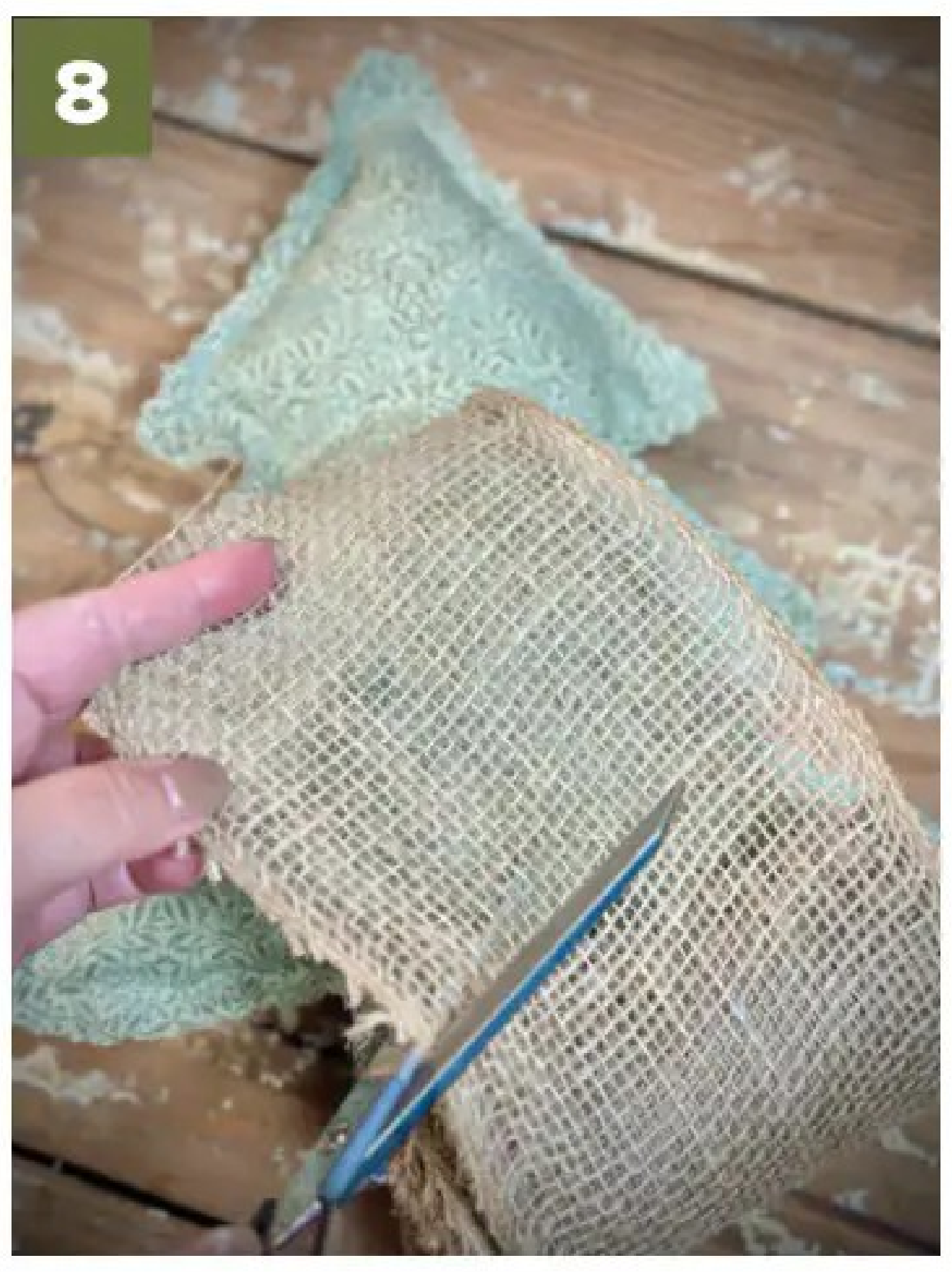
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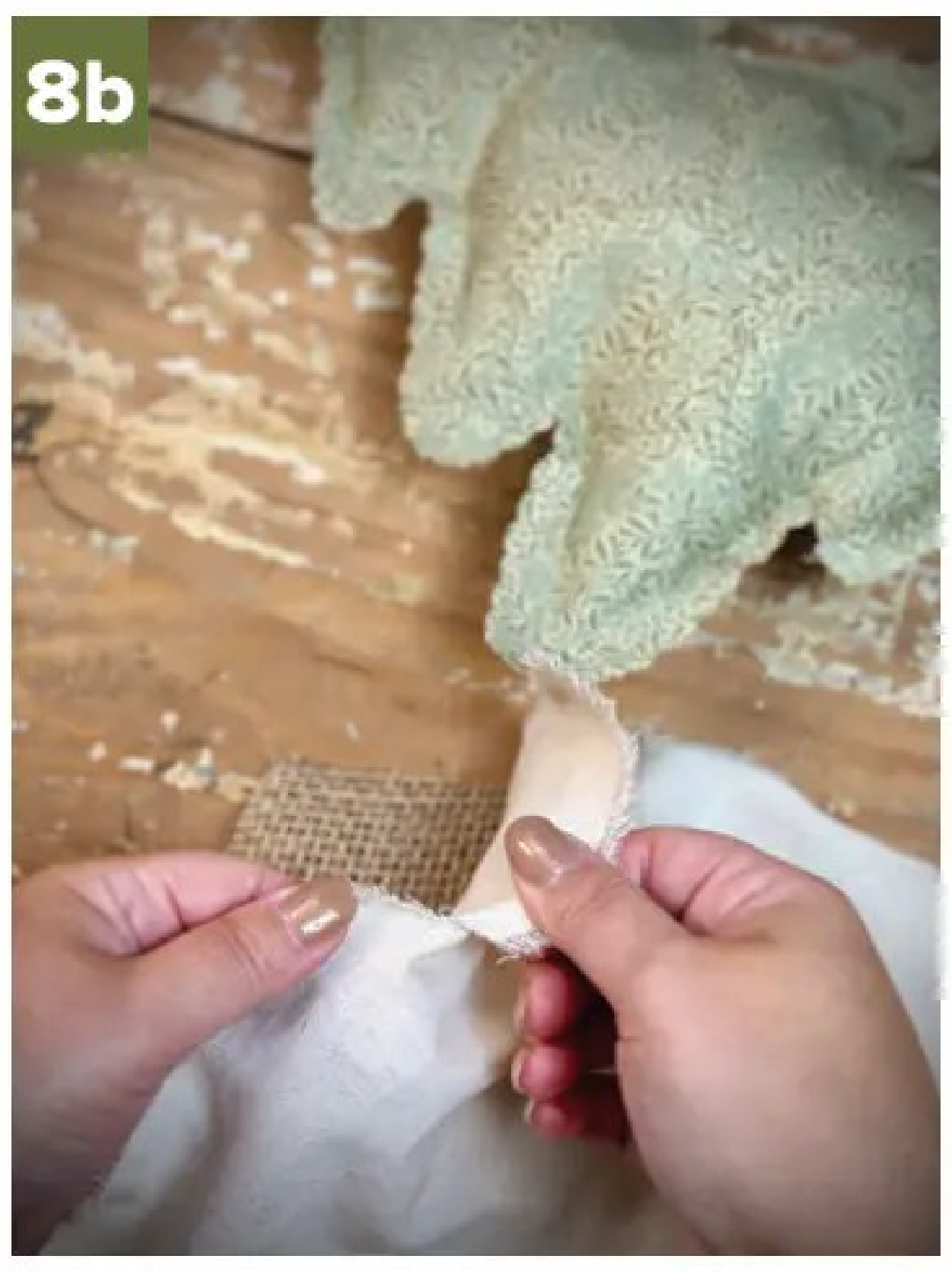
WHAT YOU'LL NEED:
- Christmas tree paper or wooden template (11.5inX10in)
- Fabric for tree
- Burlap for pocket and bow
- Muslin fabric for pocket
- Polyfil
- Rubber stamps
- Black ink
- Marker for tracing
- Pinking shears
- Scissors
- Hot glue gun
- Iron
- Jute twine
- Faux florals and cinnamon stick for pocket fillers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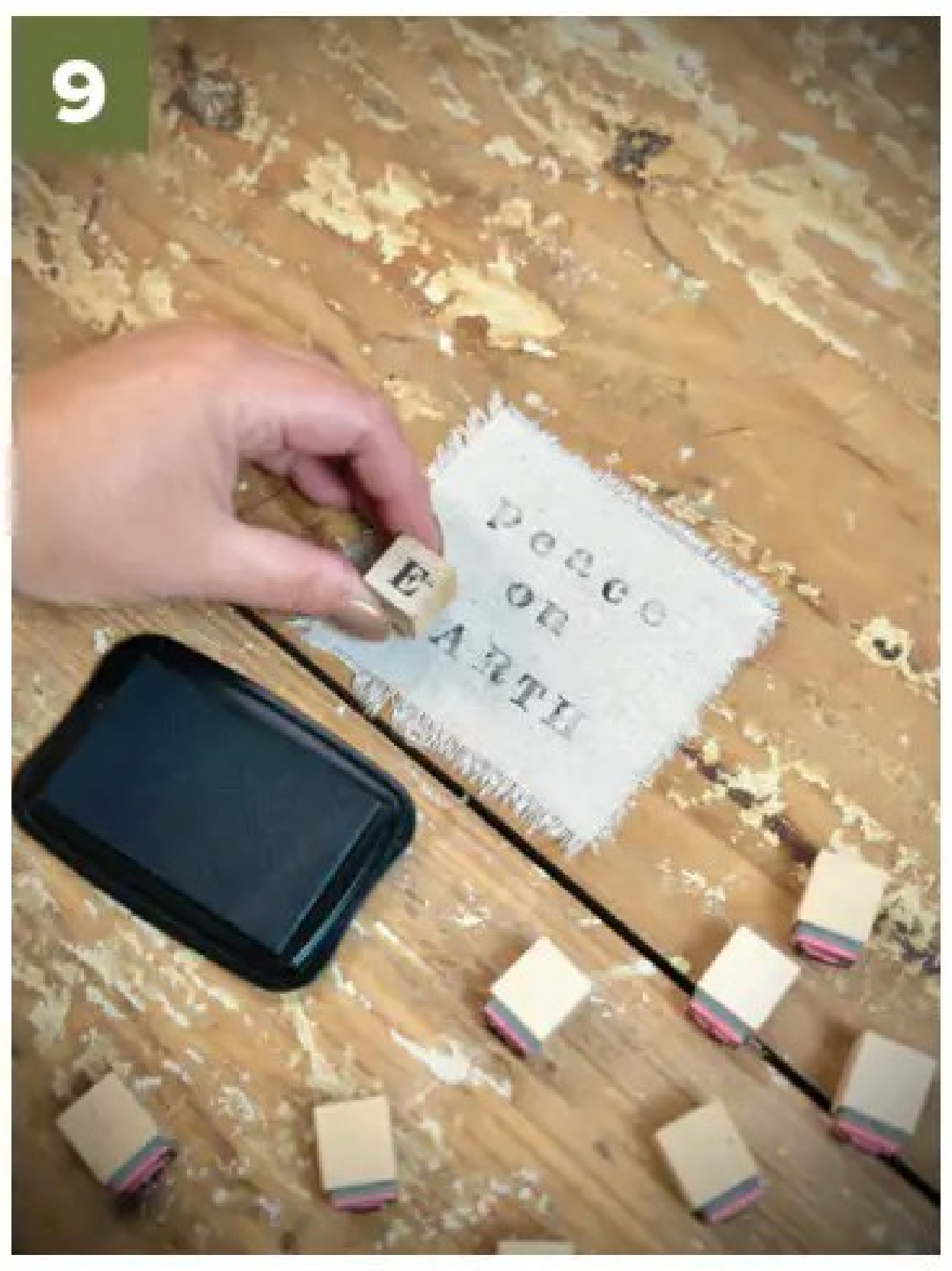
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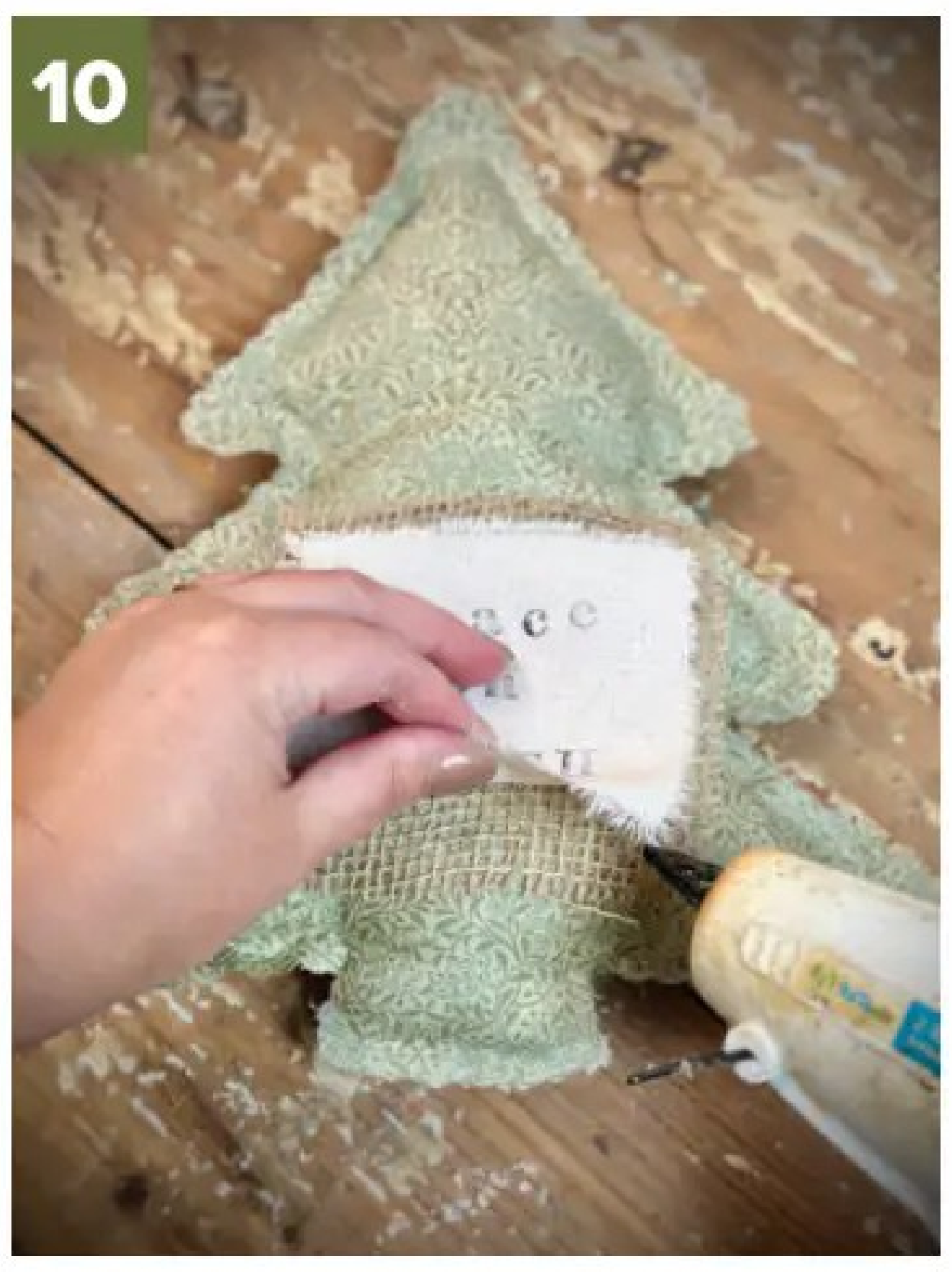
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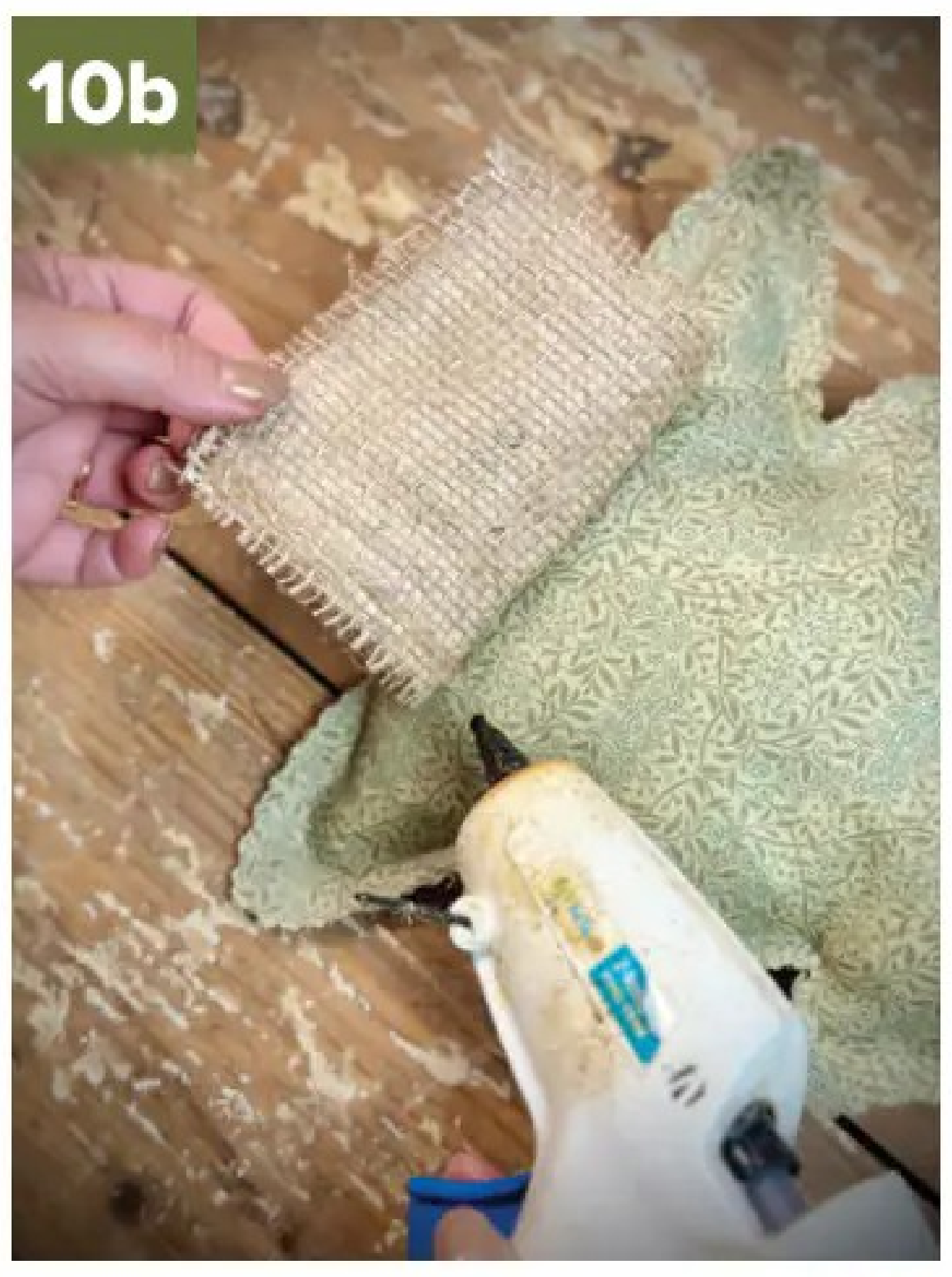
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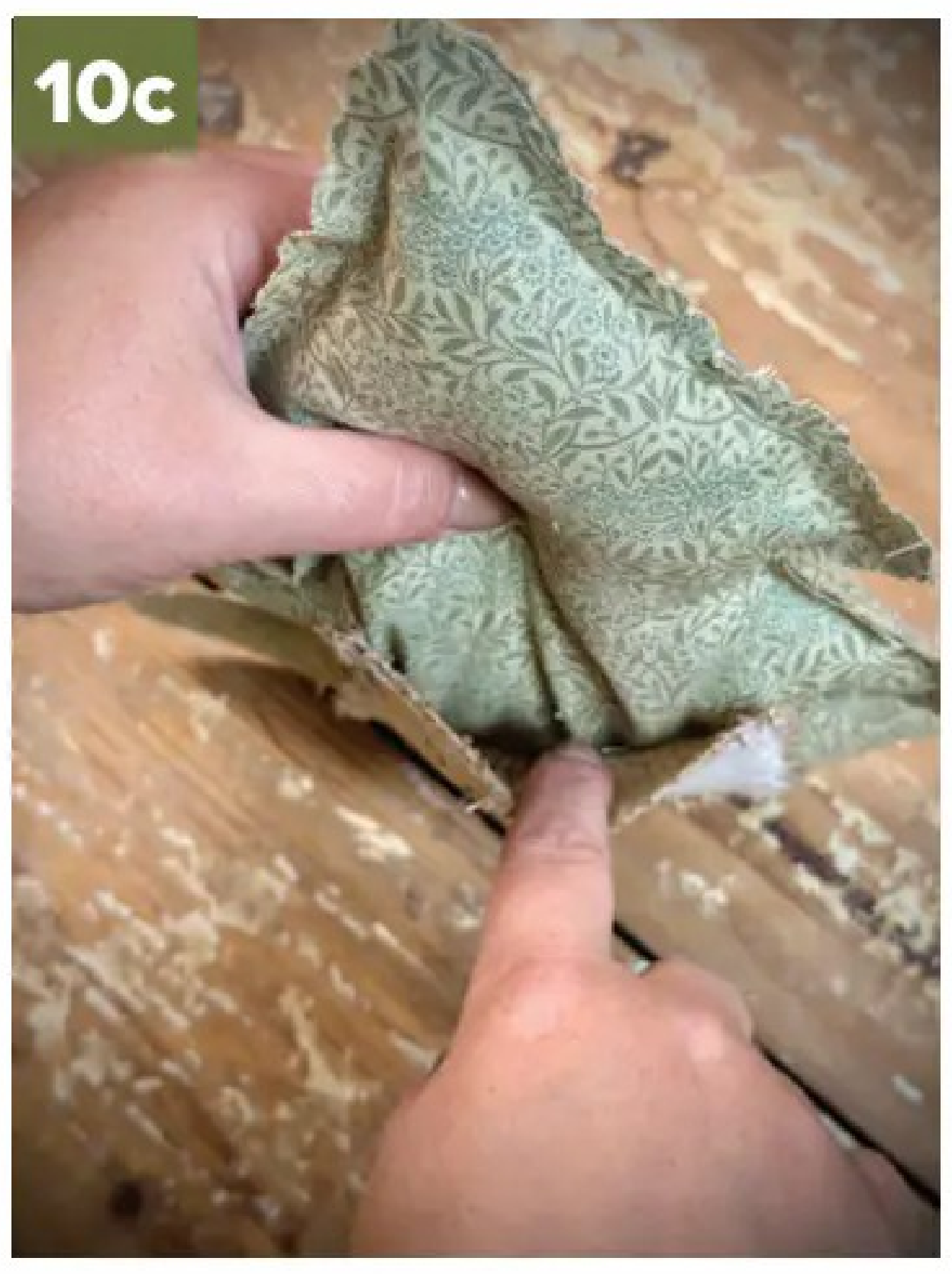
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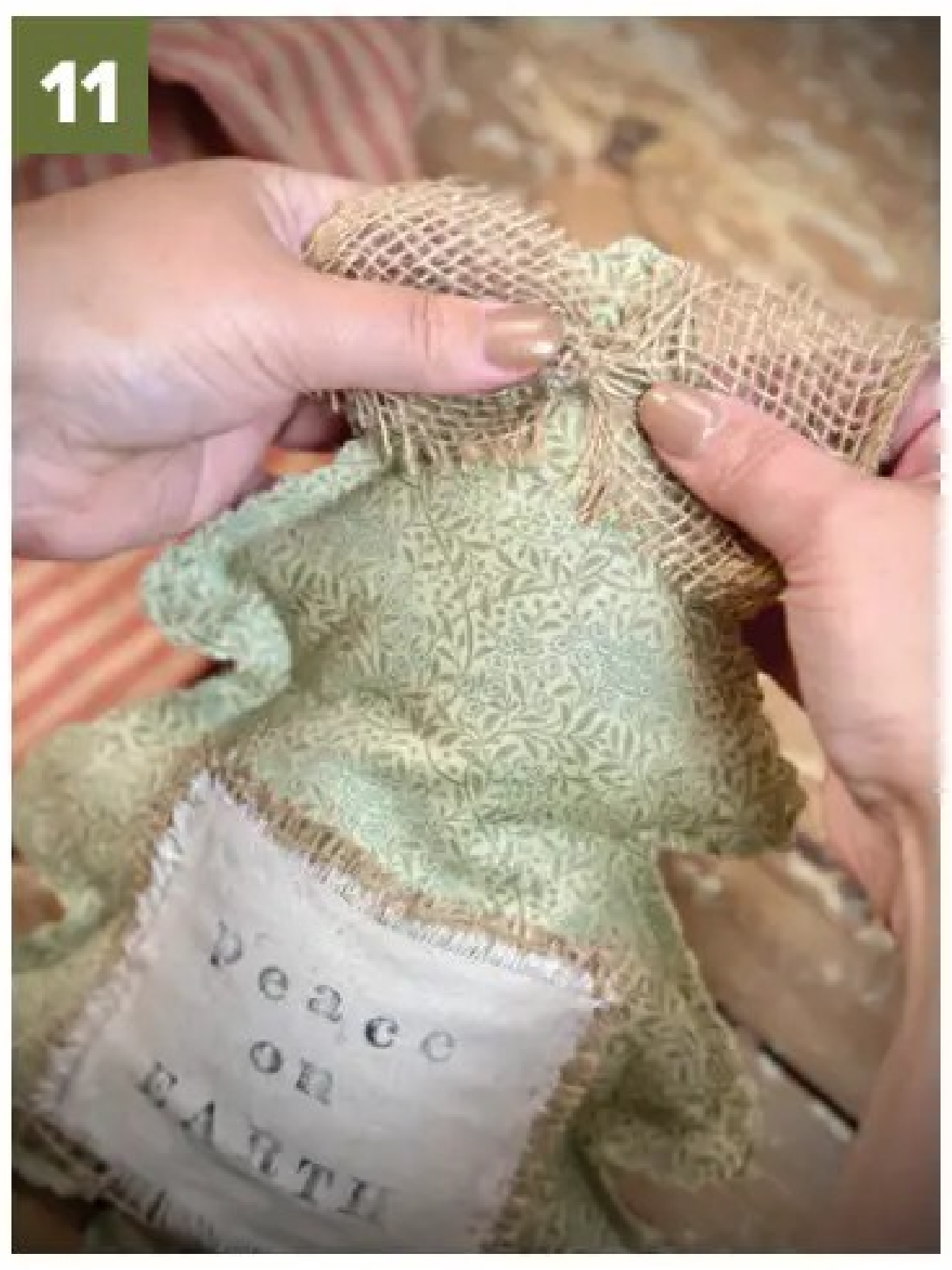
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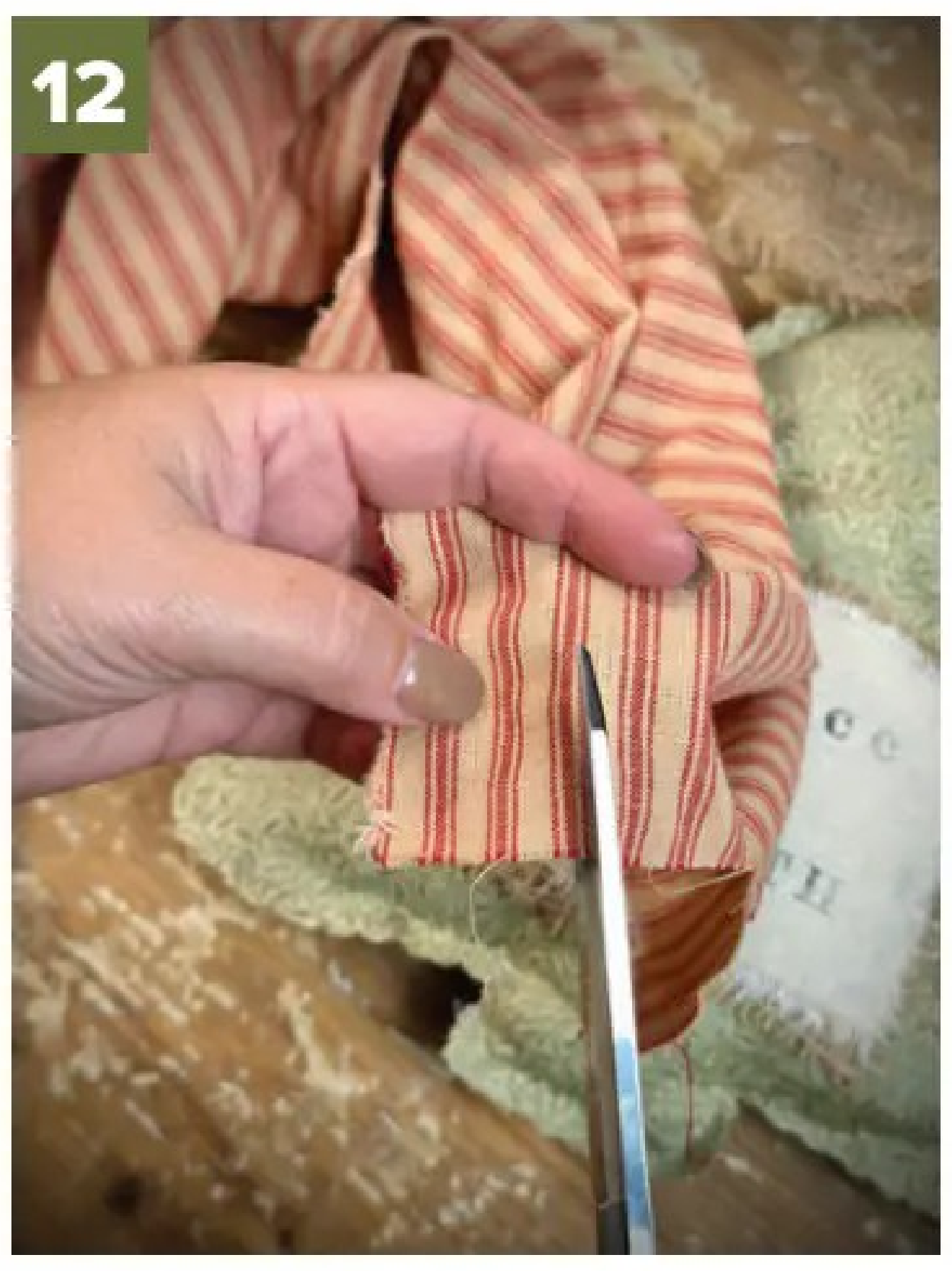
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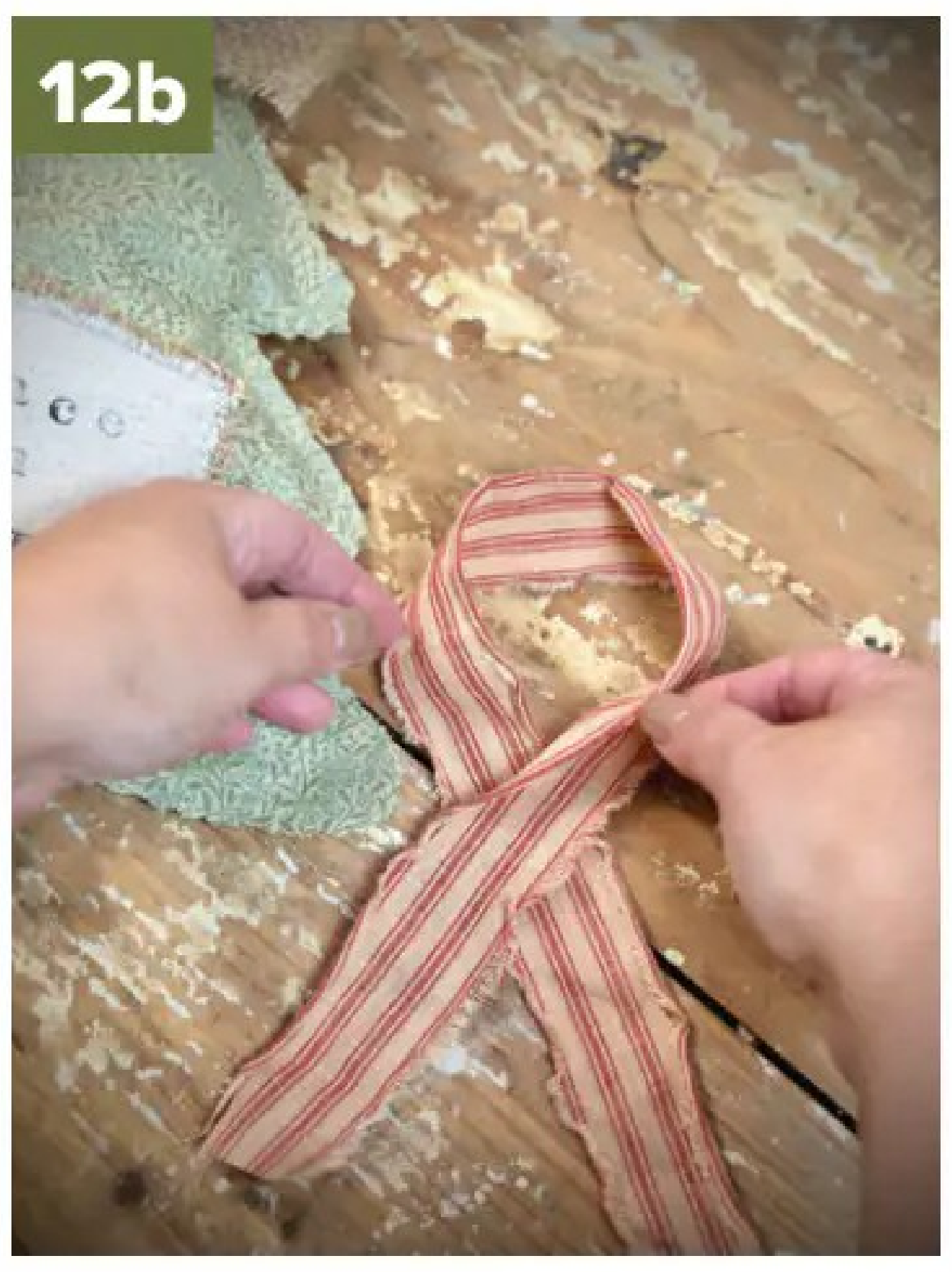
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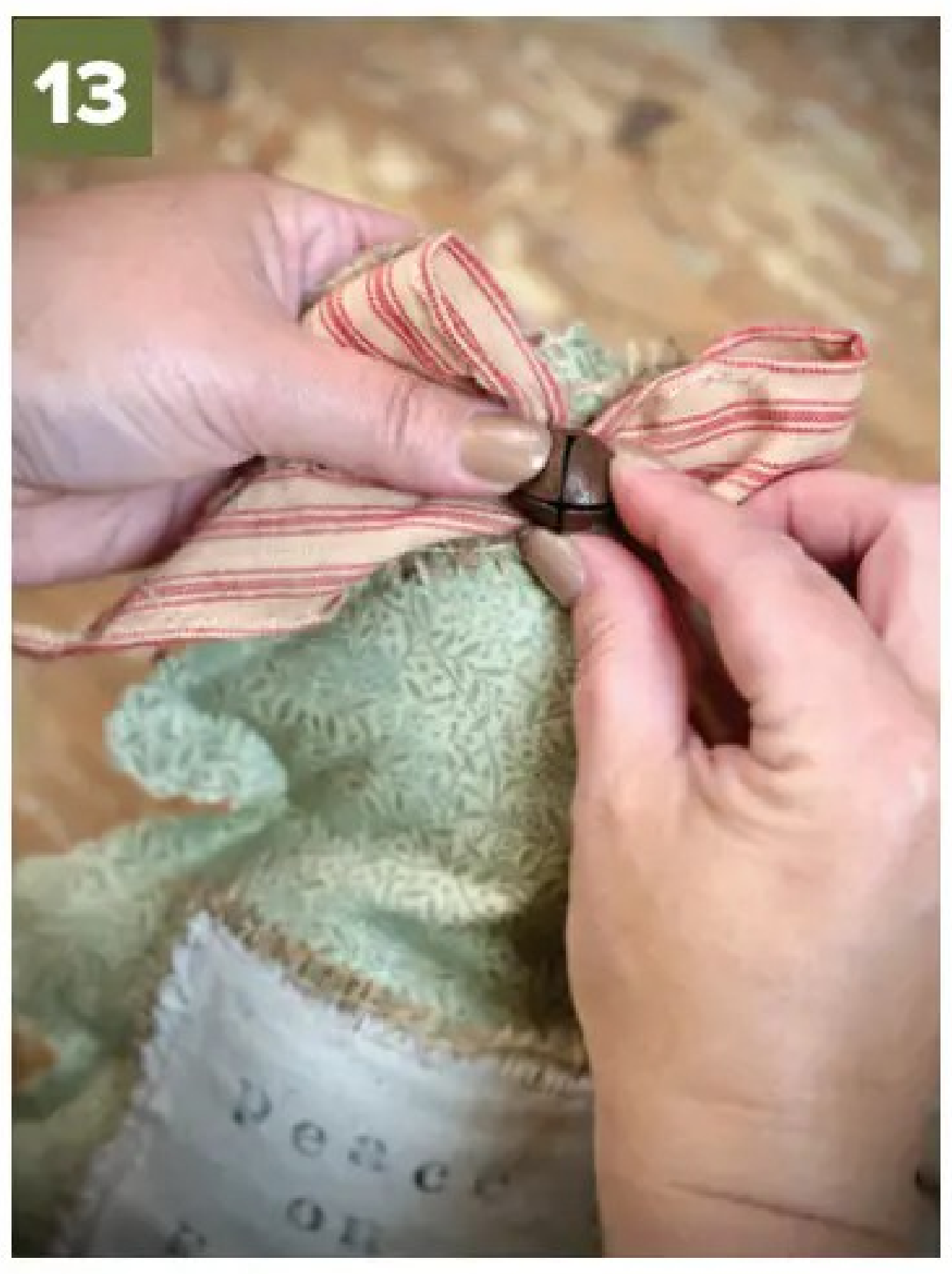
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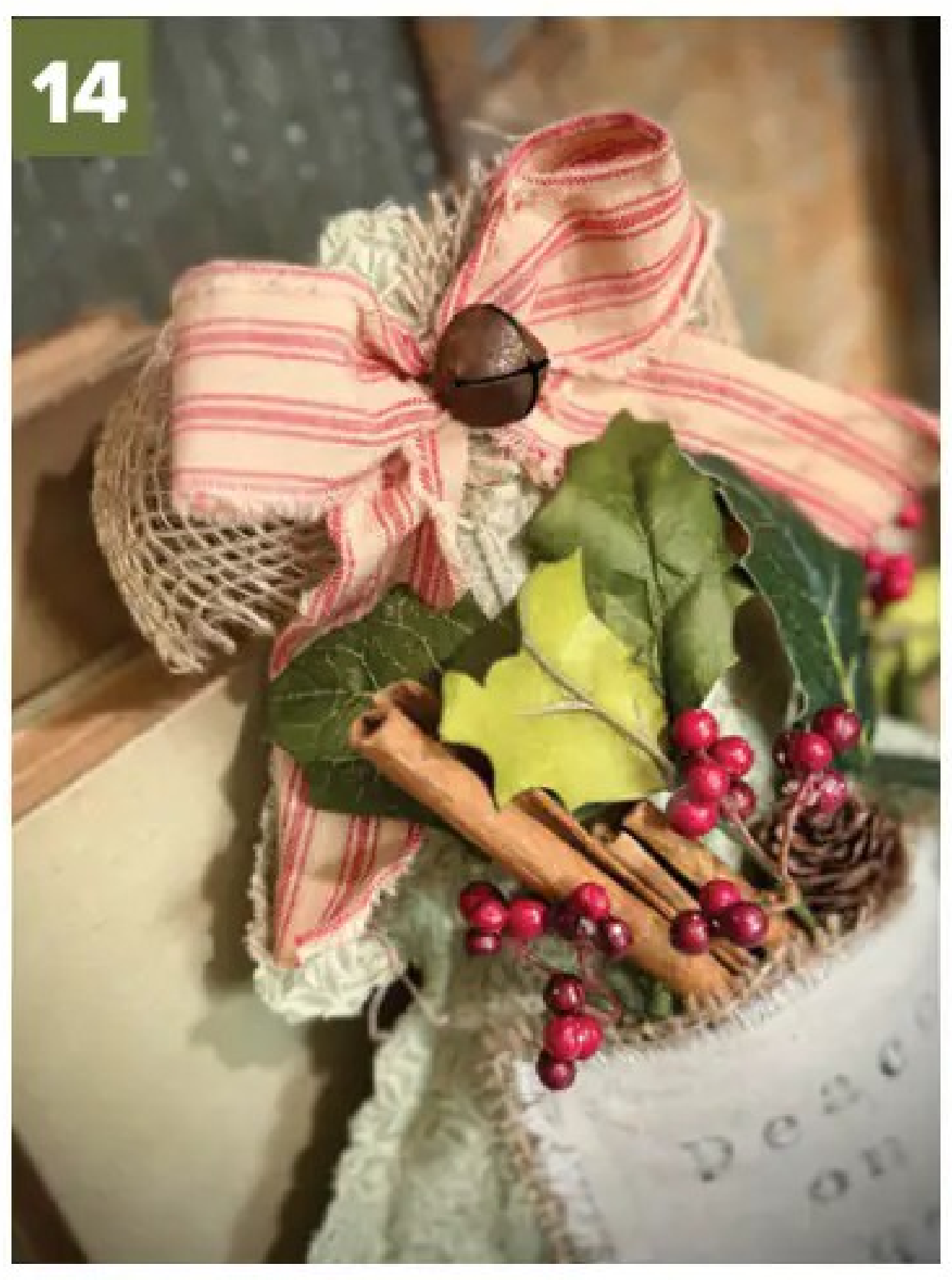
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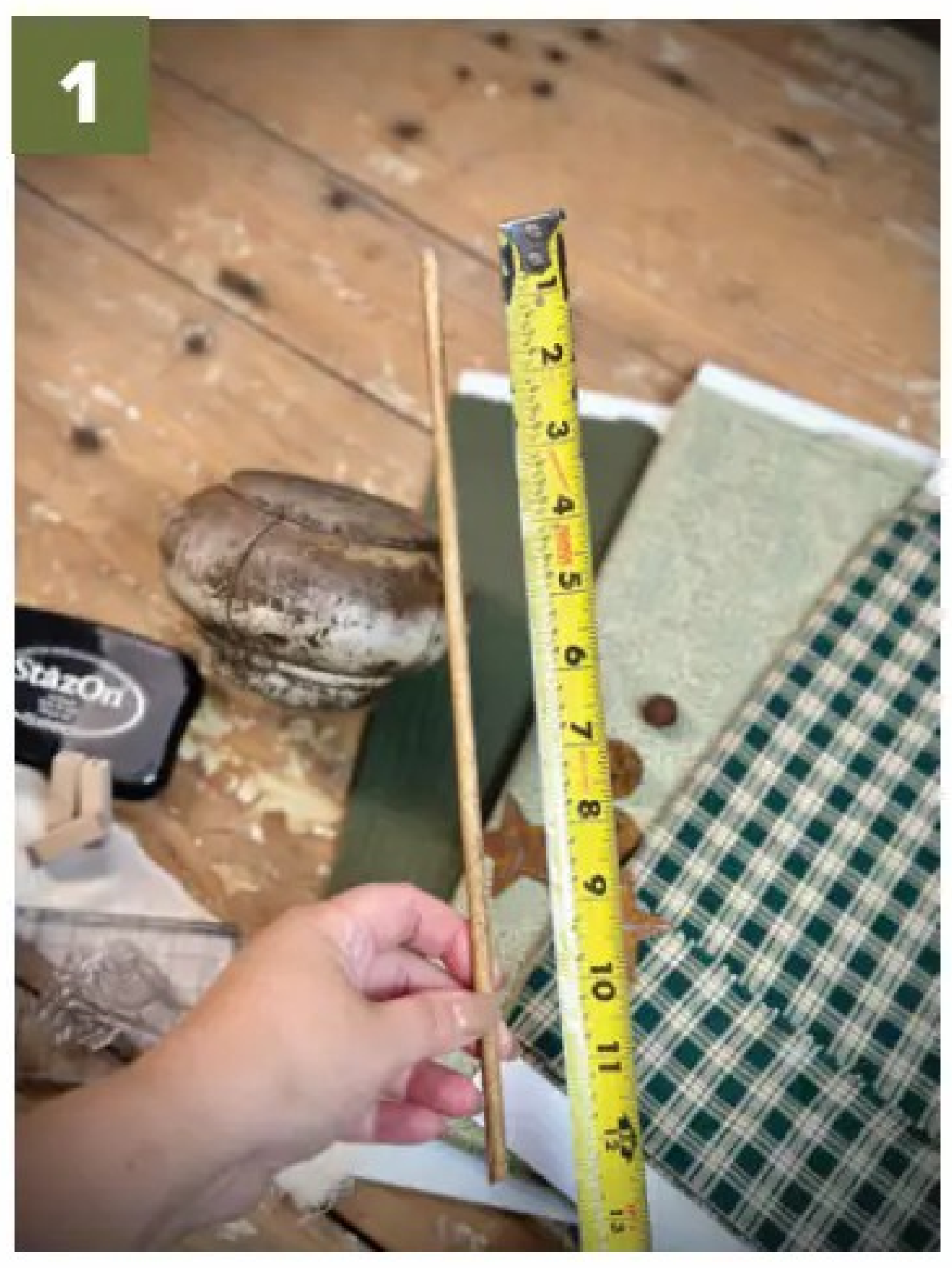
WHAT YOU'LL DO:

1. Iron your fabric for the tree shape.
2. Trace the tree template onto the back of the fabric with a marker.
3. Trace another tree.
4. Cut out the trees with pinking shears.
5. Hot glue the trees together with the design facing outwards, making sure to leave enough of an opening at the bottom to stuff with polyfil.
6. Stuff the tree with polyfil, pushing it into the corners and top to ensure it is nice and fluffy.
7. Once done stuffing, hot glue the opening at the bottom to close it up.
8. Cut a piece of burlap and a slightly smaller piece of muslin for the pocket.
9. Use the black ink and rubber stamps to add festive words.
10. To get a layered look, glue the edges of the muslin to the burlap and hot glue three of the burlap sides to the tree, leaving the top open to fill.
11. Take a small piece of pinched or tied burlap and hot glue at the top of the tree.
12. Rip a piece of Red Ticking Fabric to create a bow and hot glue onto the burlap.
13. Hot glue the rusty bell in the center of the bow.
14. Fill the pocket with faux florals, cinnamon sticks or whatever other festive items you want!

JOY

Ripped Fabric Christmas Tree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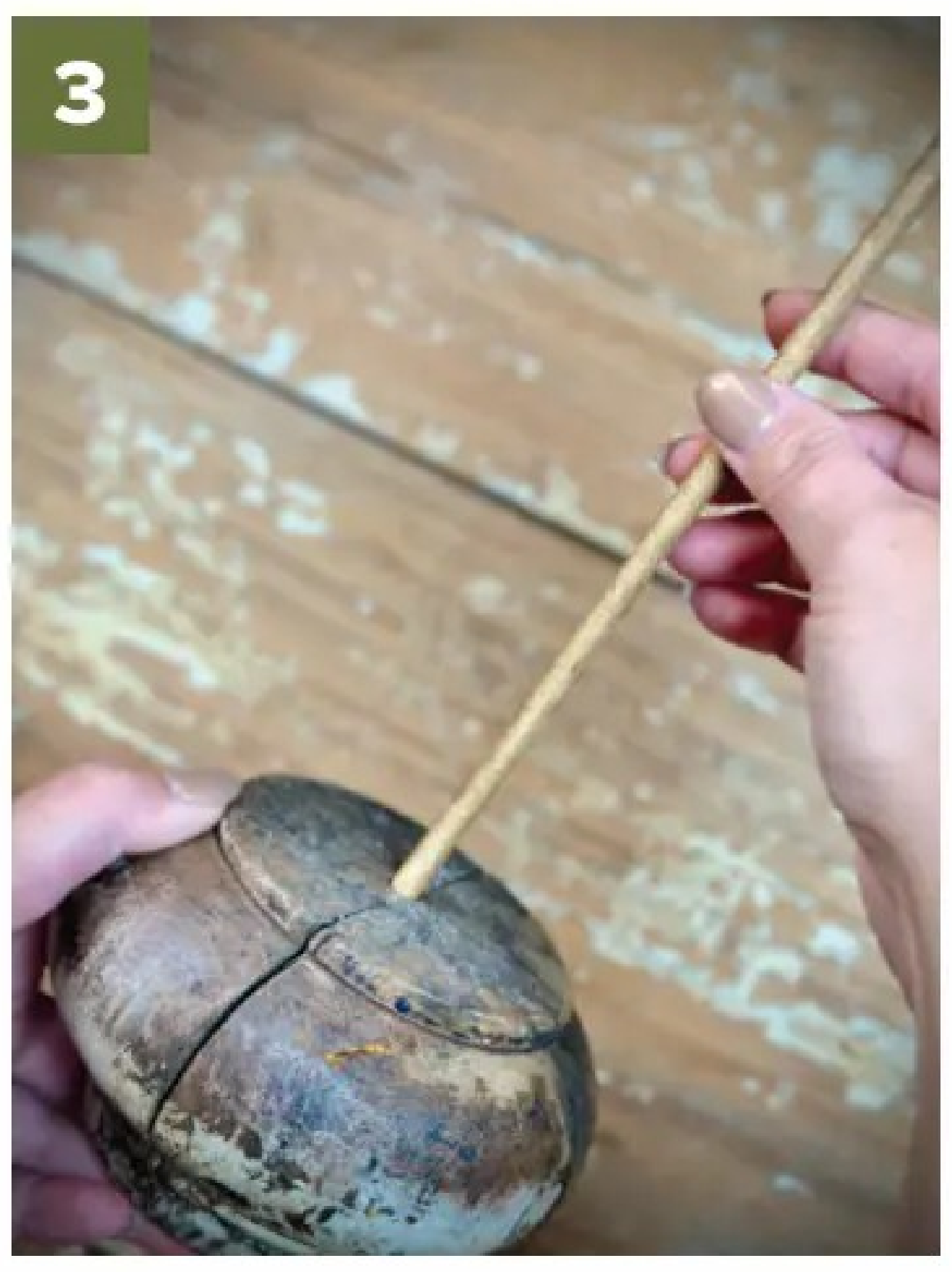
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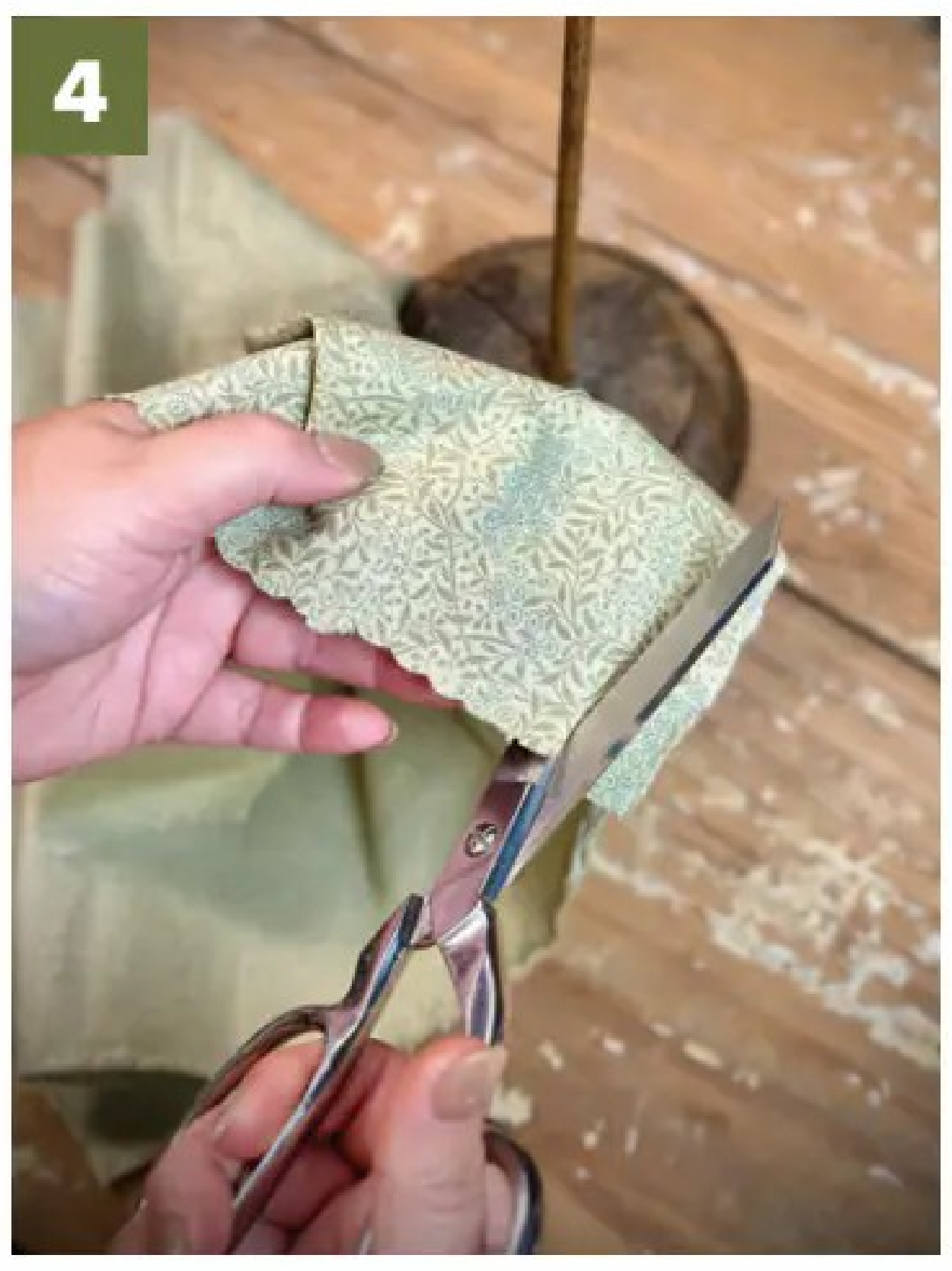
WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Base for tree (Summer used a salvaged bun foot from a piece of furniture)
- Wooden dowel (Summer's dowel was just over 12in)
- Various green fabric to create Christmas tree
- Muslin fabric
- Rubber stamps
- Black ink
- 2 rusty stars
- 2 rusty bells
- Rusty safety pin
- Scissors
- Hot glue gun
- Jute twine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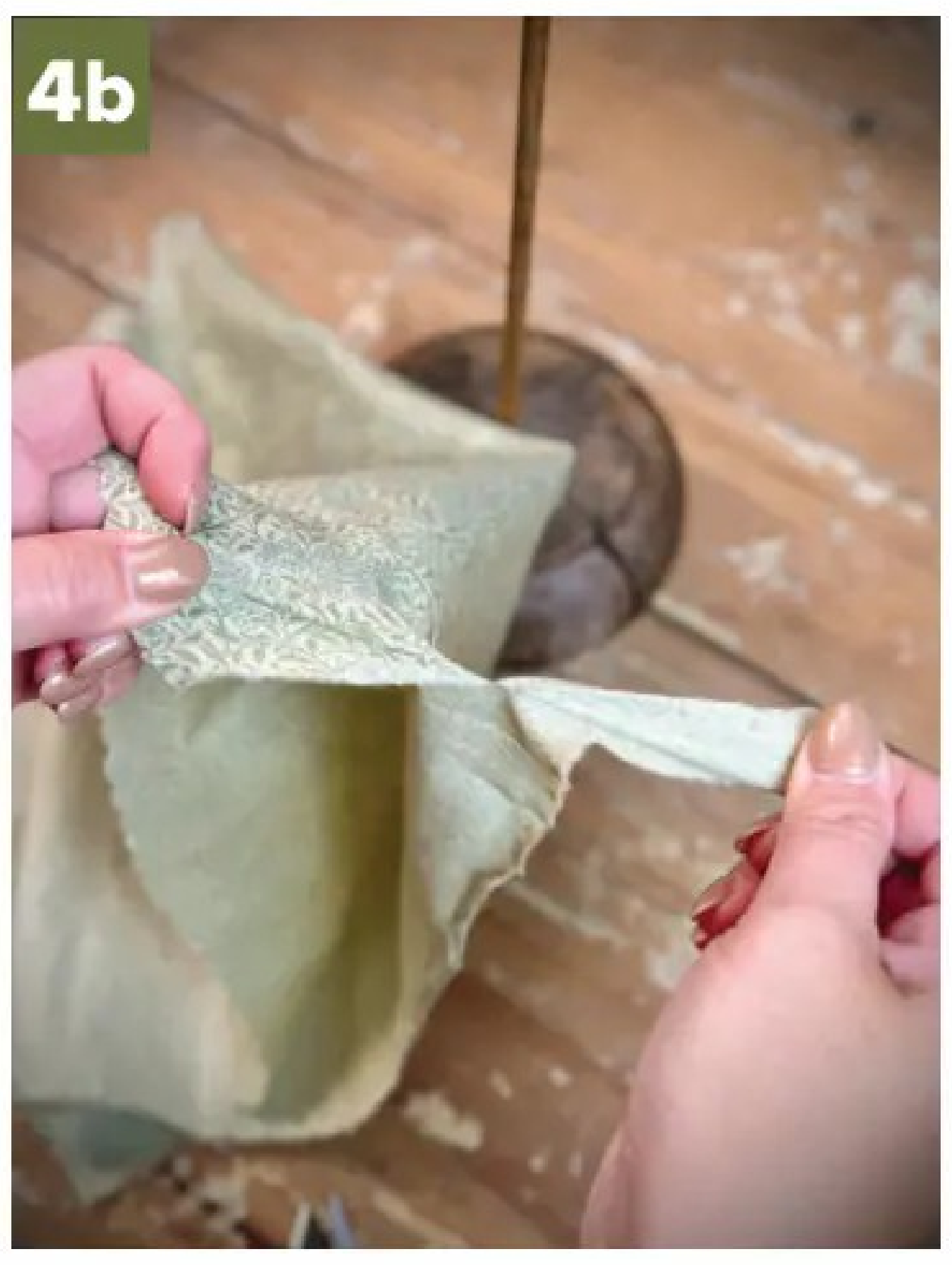
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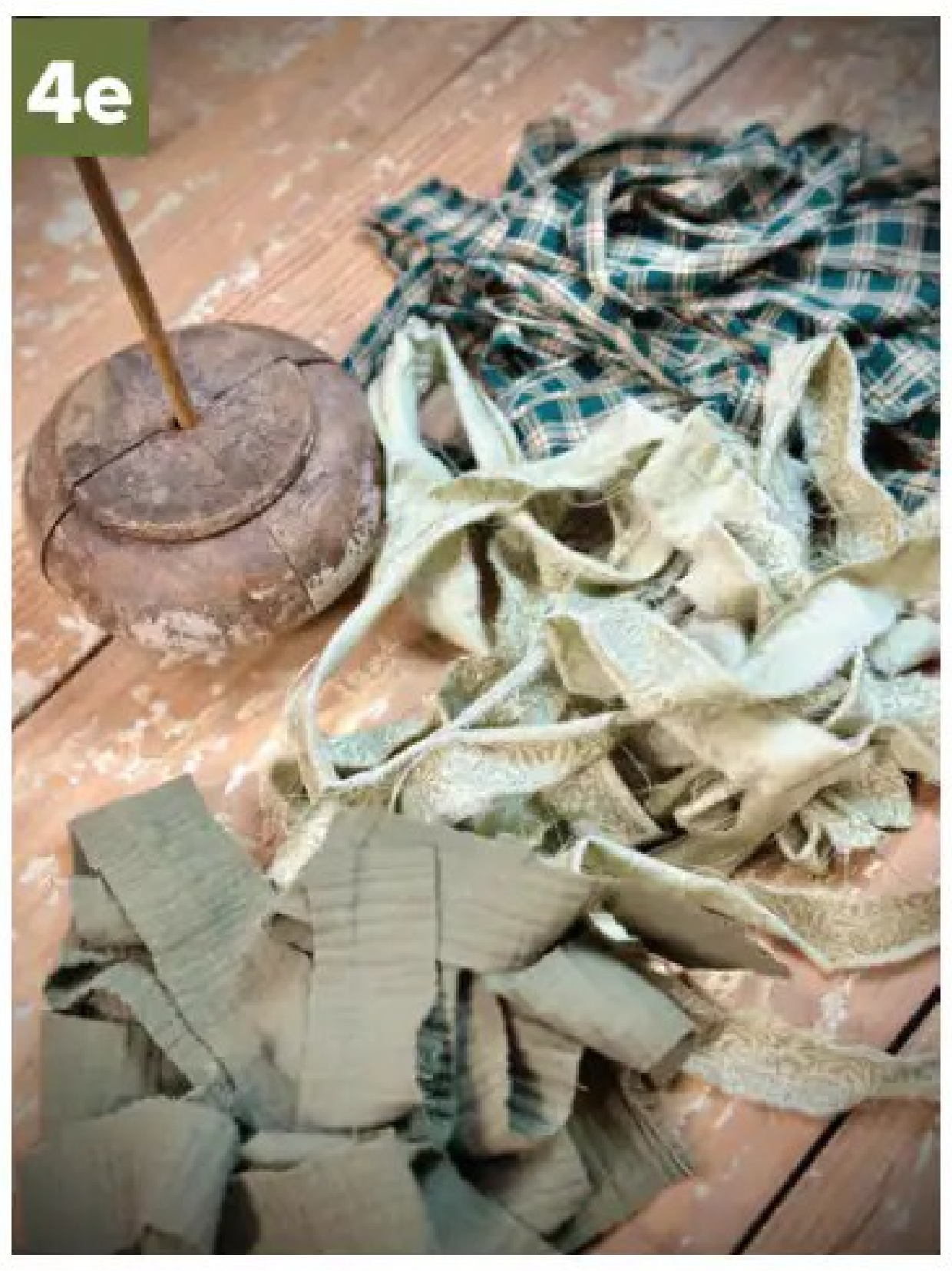
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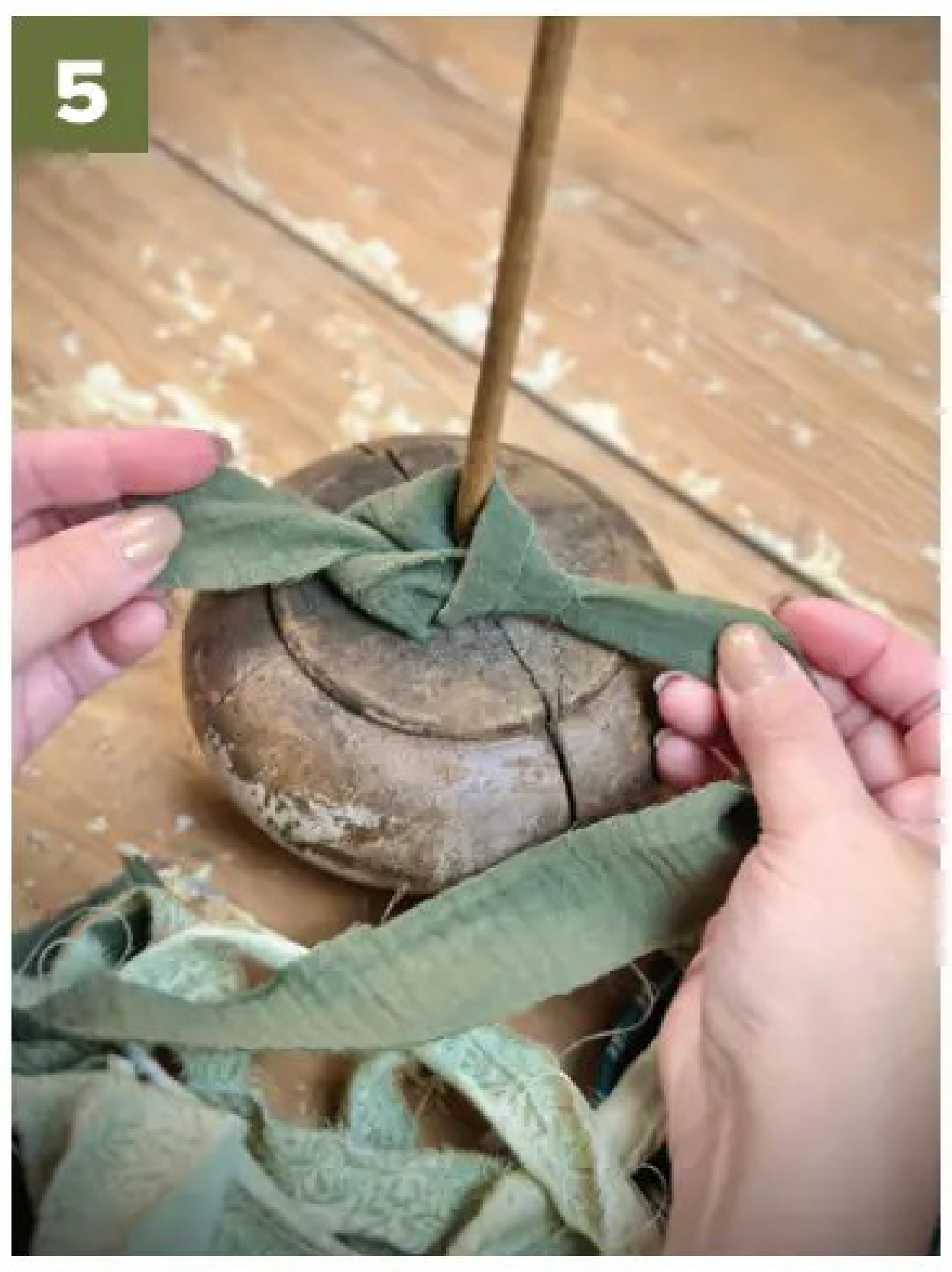
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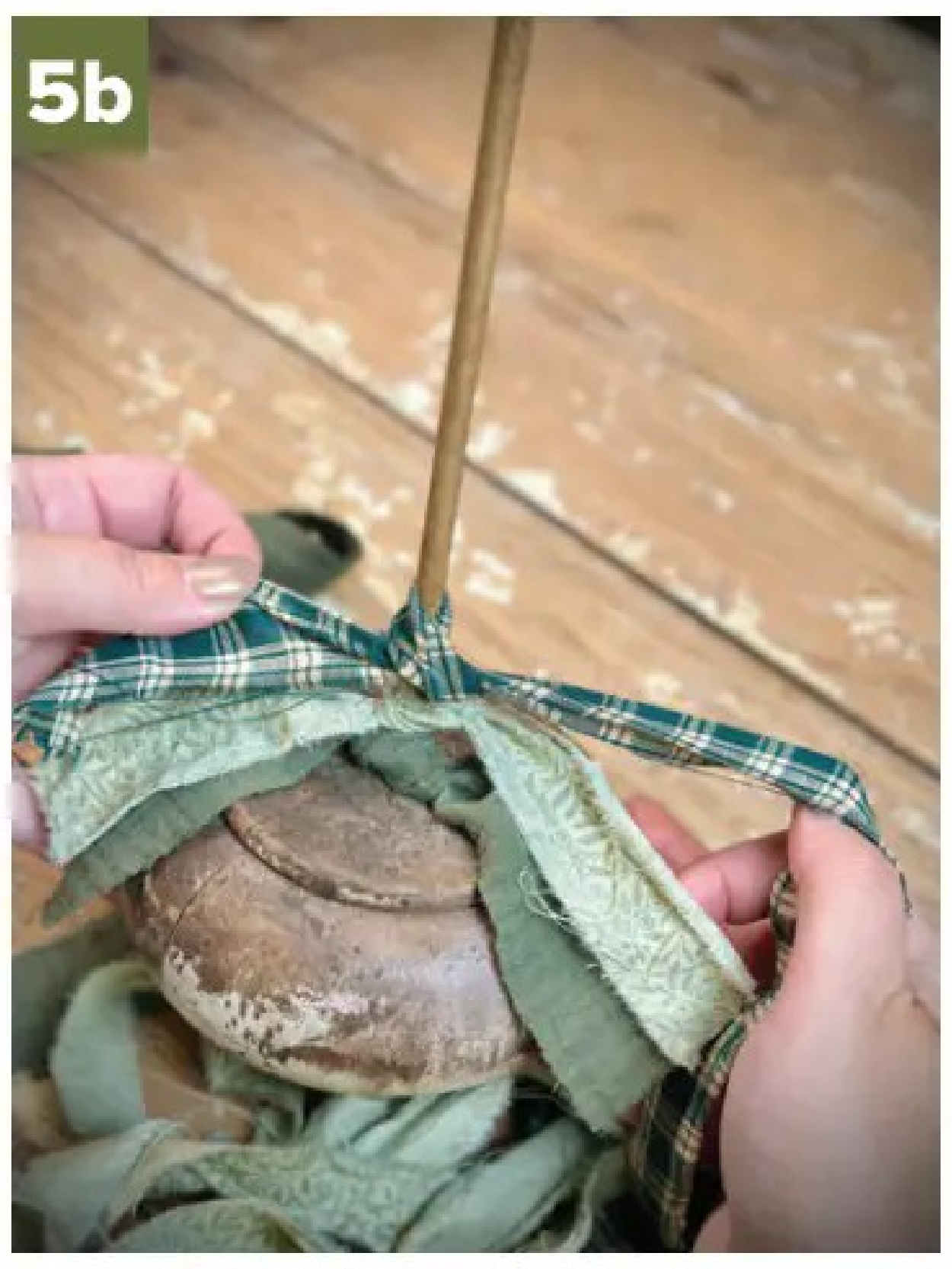
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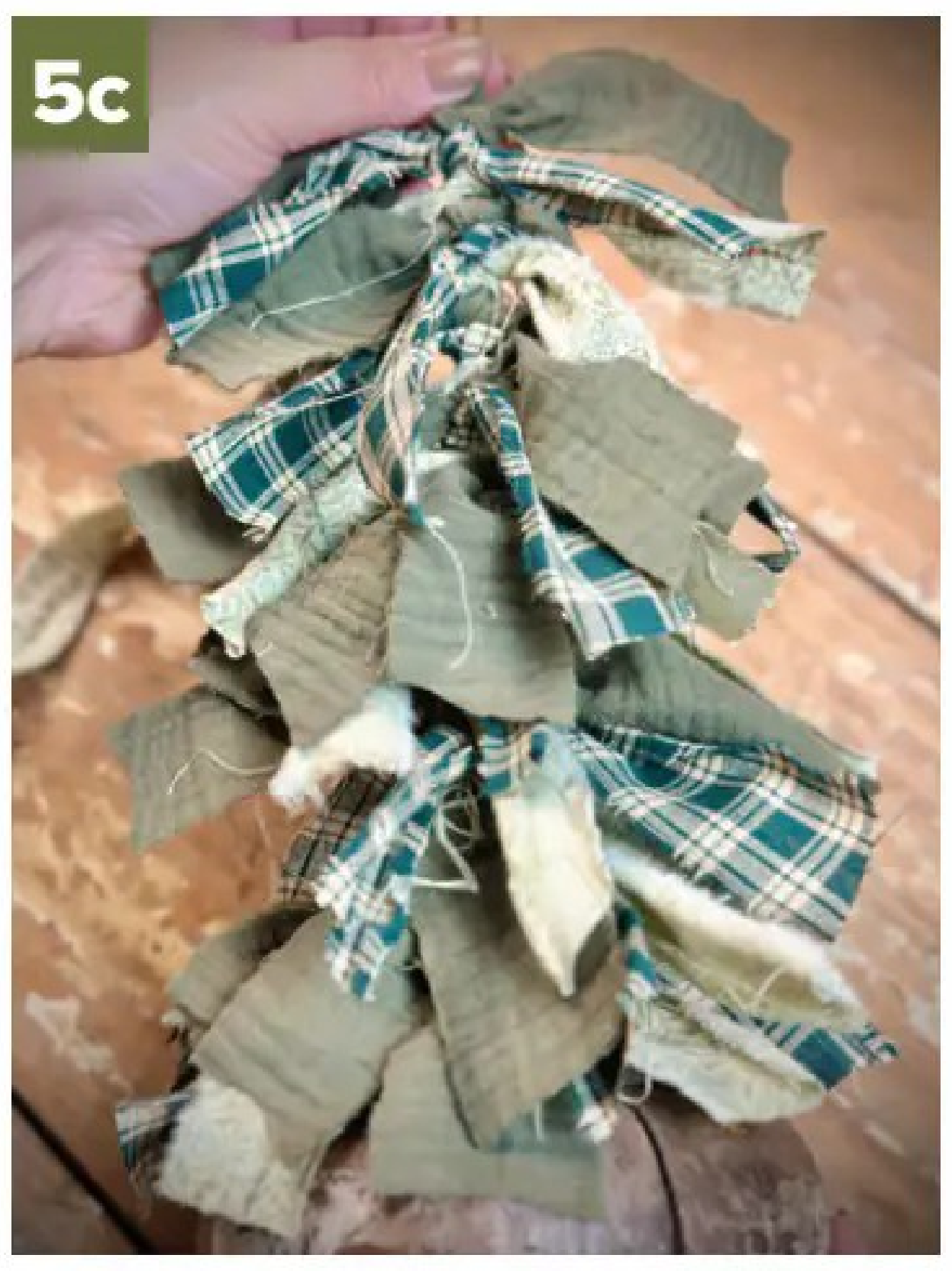
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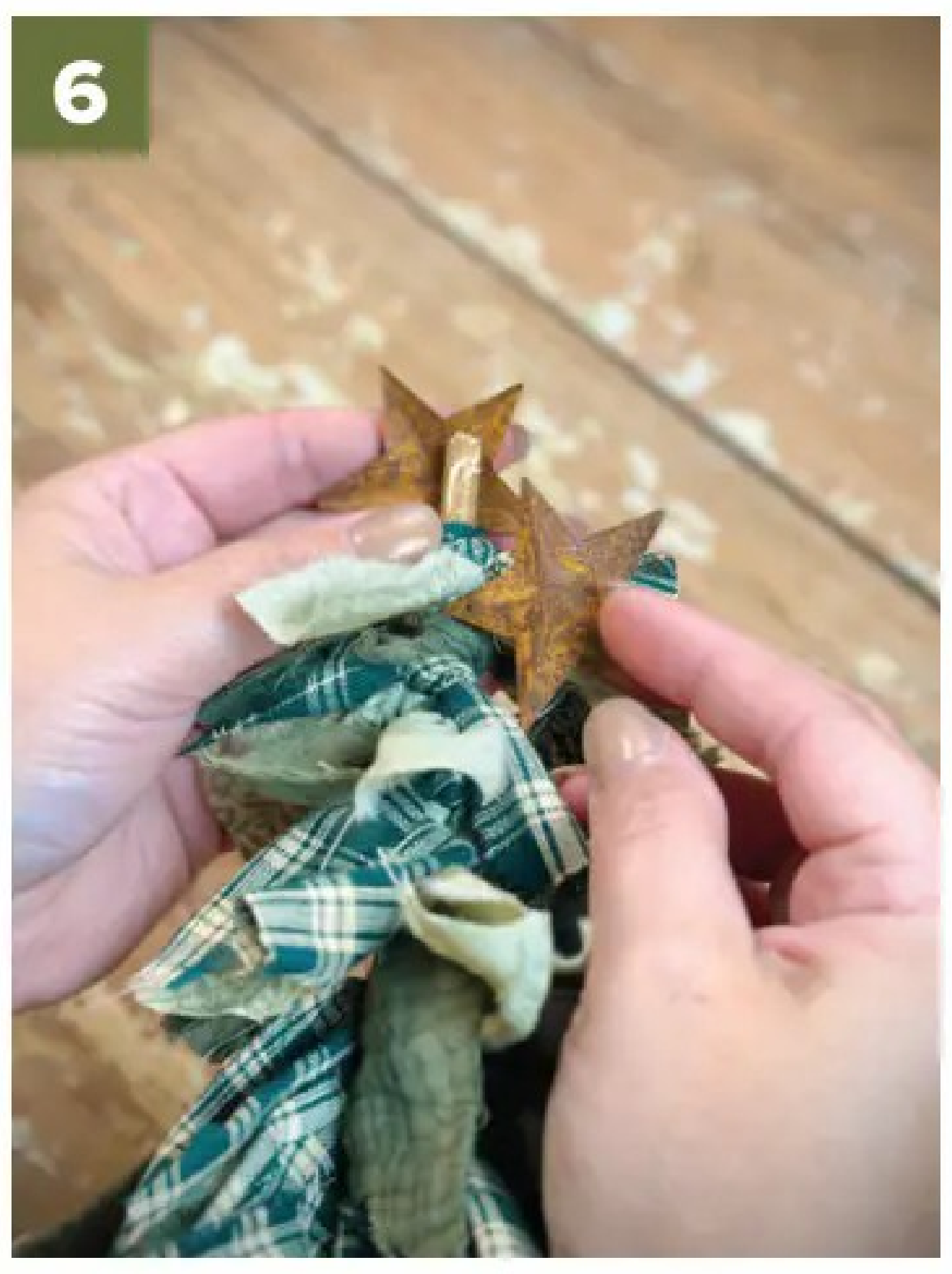
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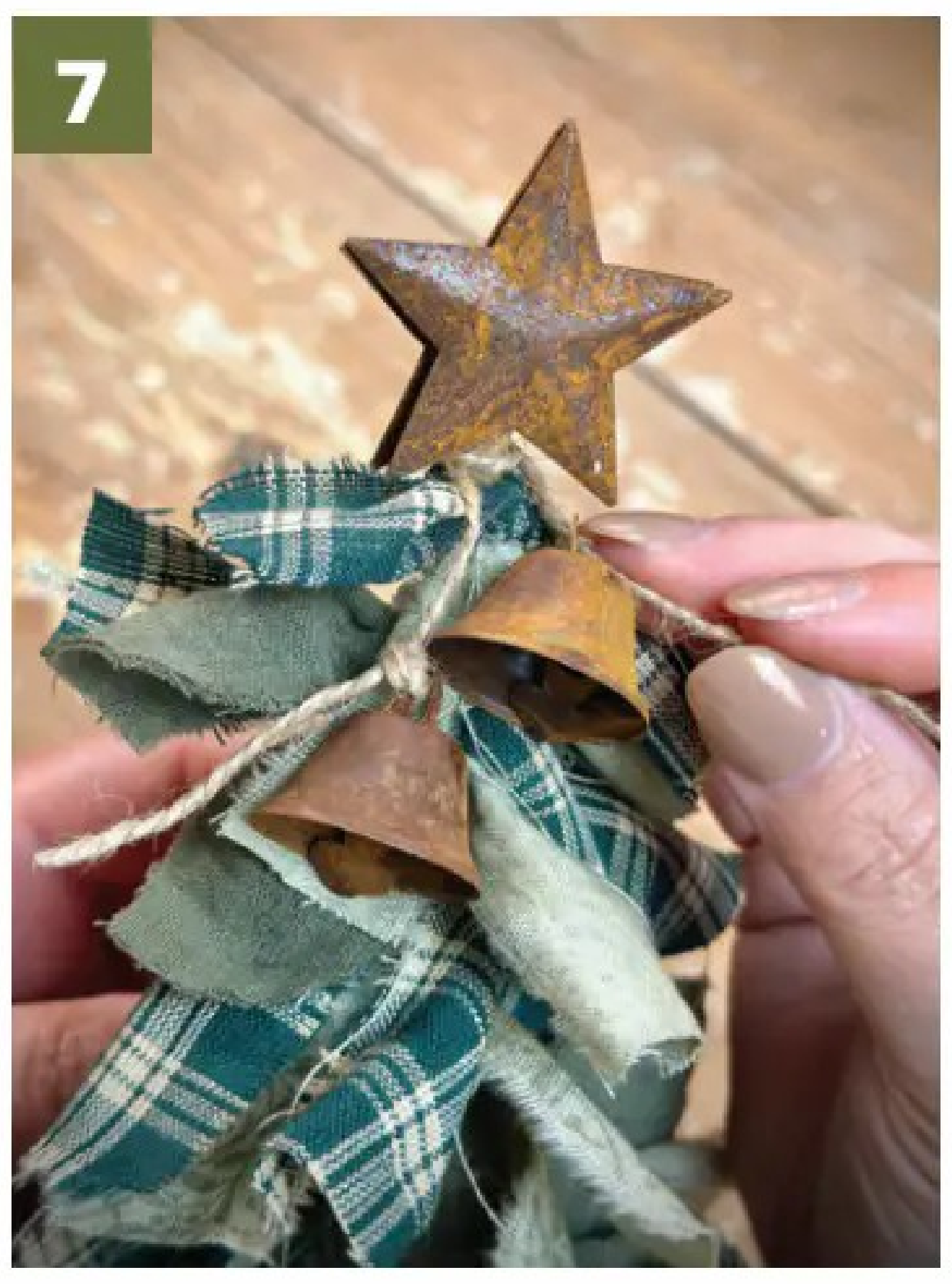
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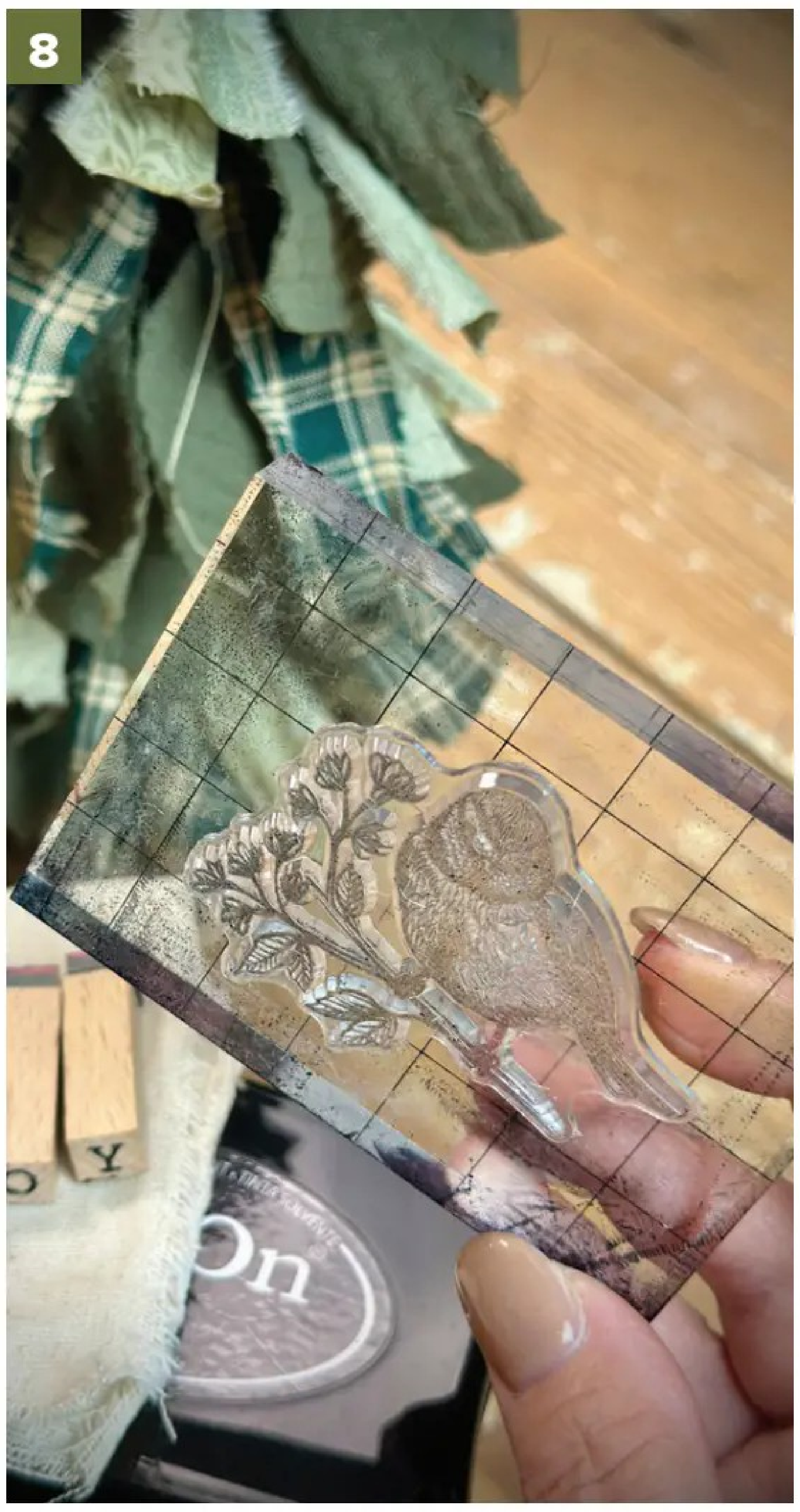
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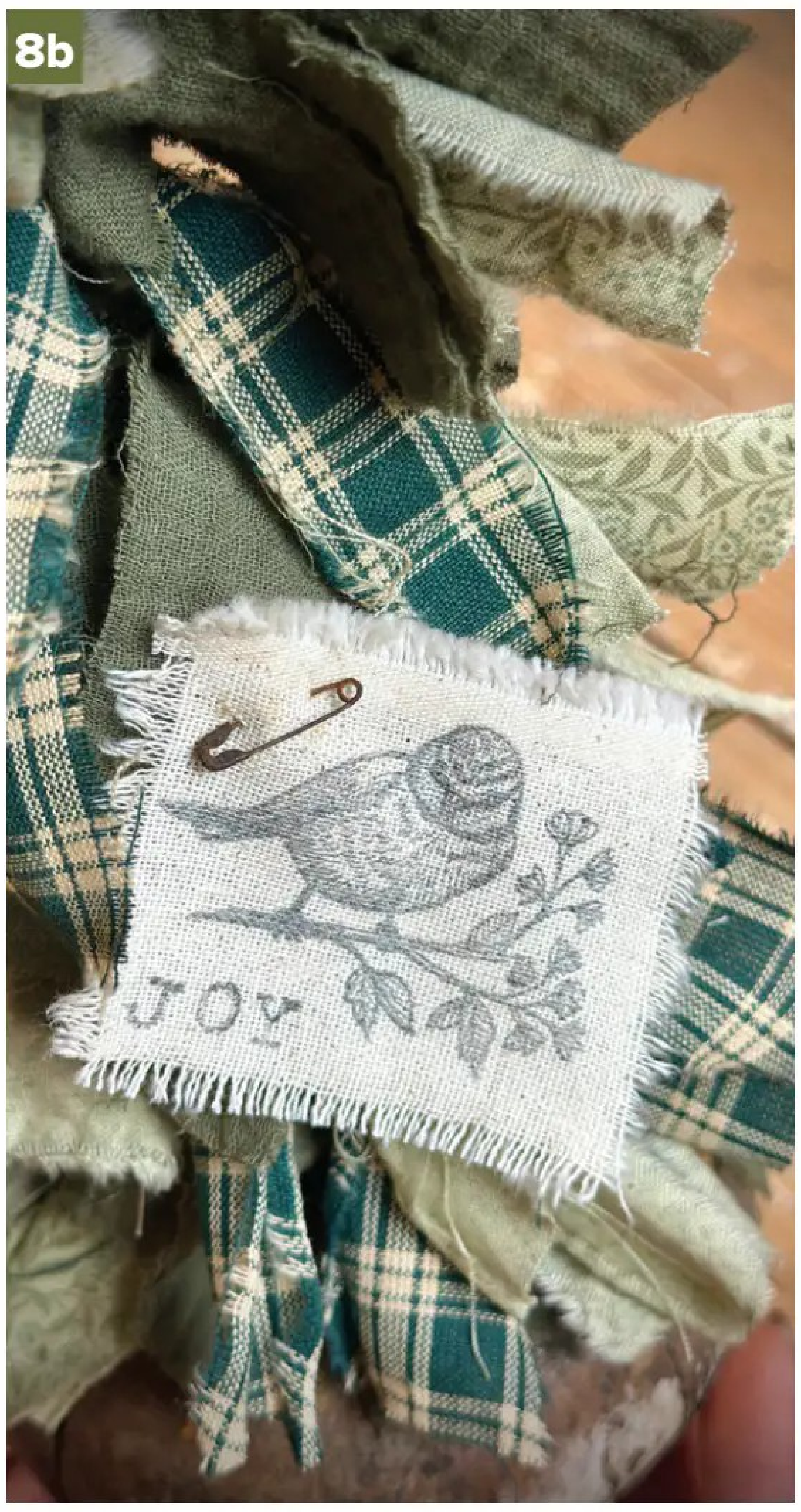
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WHAT YOU'LL DO:

1. Cut your dowel to fit your base.
2. Make sure there is a hole drilled in the wood base for the dowel.
3. Use hot glue to secure the dowel in the hole of the base.
4. Rip or cut multiple strips of each fabric about an inch wide. The length doesn't matter—you'll cut as you go.
5. Tie your first piece of fabric around the dowel, then cut it to the length you want the widest part of your tree to be. Keep tying on fabric pieces, creating a triangle tree form as you get up to the very top. You can trim here and there after you've finished. Push the fabric down on the dowel to pack the fabric and make the tree fuller.
6. Hot glue two rusty stars together with the tip of the wooden dowel between them.
7. Using the jute twine, connect the rusty bells together and tie under the star at the top.
8. Use your rubber stamps with black ink and muslin to create your own custom label, then attach to the tree with a rusty safety pin.

Outdoor Living

Cozy seating and dining areas surrounded by carefully selected foliage and landscape features connect the interior and exterior design of our Project Utah House.

Written by **Laura Shimko**

Landscape design and images by **EBW Landscape Design**

Designing a home is one thing—the Fox Group has been hard at work on that—but designing the landscape around it is another. Creating the right setting through foliage, hardscapes and layout is far from an afterthought; it is instead a carefully thought-out plan that enhances the architecture and overall vibe of the home that it surrounds. For landscape designer Emily Brooks Wayment of EBW Landscape Design, ensuring the exterior landscaping reflects the home inside and out is essential to successfully integrating the design. "Our main goals were to design a farmhouse/cottage garden that will allow for grass space to play games and make sense on a slender lot," Emily says.

FLORALS, FOLIAGE AND FUN

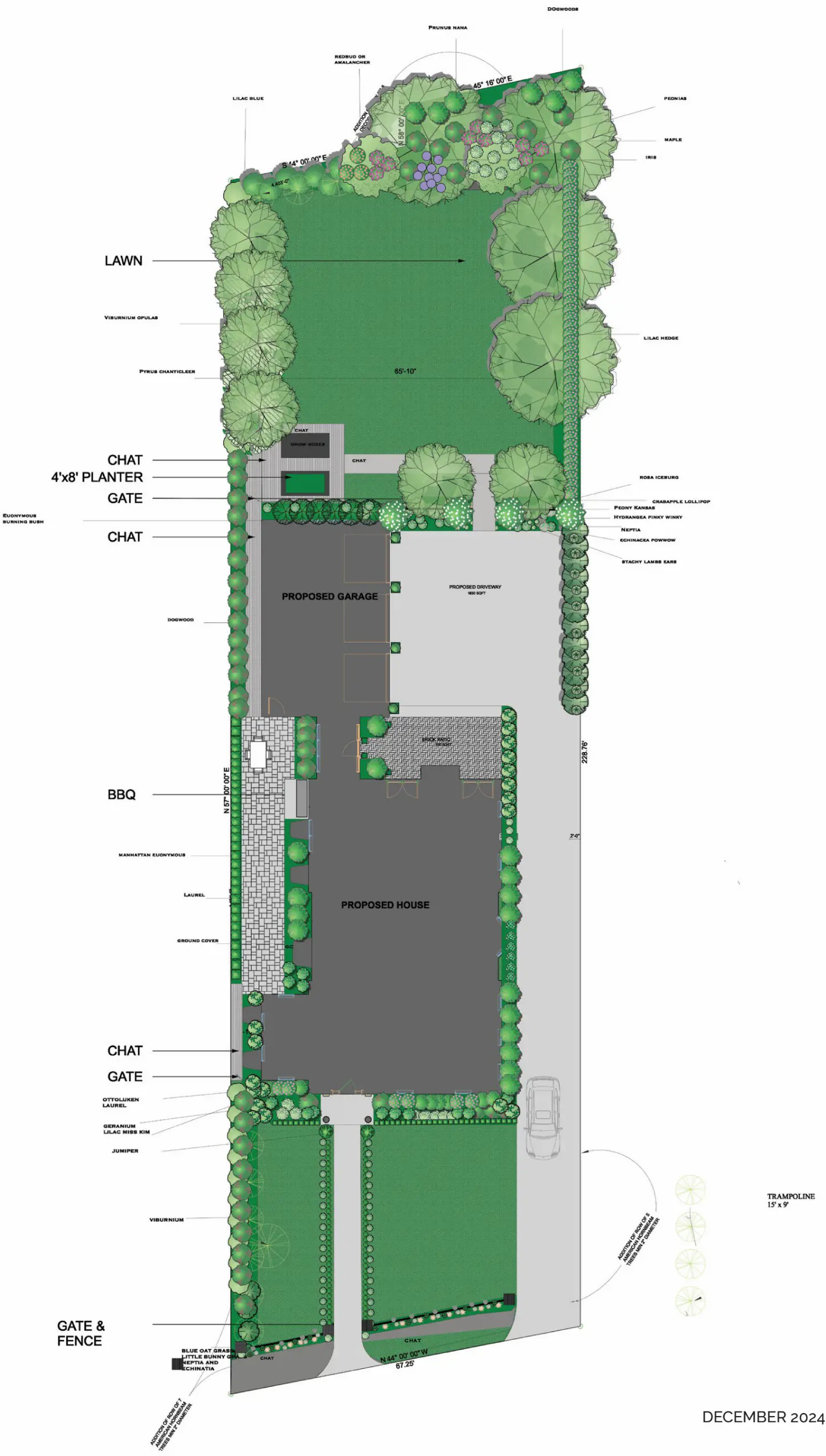
Emily's design includes a variety of flowers, trees and shrubbery to create an authentic farmhouse feel surrounding the house. "The distinct stone and timeless architecture of the home inspired the landscape design," Emily says. "I tried to create a garden that I feel best suits the home."

At the front of the house, rocking chairs sit on the porch overlooking a garden of laurels, lilacs and junipers for privacy. "I wanted to frame the home with shrubs and hydrangeas," she says. "I love the stonework on this particular home and added columns with a picket fence to frame the garden."

Wide green lawns provide the perfect areas for play and recreation, while a variety of plantings provide privacy, color and a beautiful view year-round. "The garden was just planted, but as it grows, the plants will fill the spaces so that seasonally something is always growing there," Emily says.

VIEWMONT LANDSCAPE PLAN

4857 VIEWMONT ST HOLLADAY, UT


DOgwoods
Prunus nana
Redbud or
Amalancher
Addition Deco
Lilac blue
45° 16' 00" E
N 58° 00' 00" E
S 44° 00' 00" E
4,403'-0"
Peonias
Maple
Iris
LAWN
Viburnium opulas
Pyrus chanticleer
65'-10"
Lilac hedge
CHAT
GROW BOXES
4'x8' PLANTER
GATE
CHAT
Euonymous
burning bush
CHAT
Rosa iceburg
Crabapple lollipop
Peony Kansas
Hydrangea pinky winky
Neptia
Echinacea powwow
Stachy lambs ears
PROPOSED GARAGE
PROPOSED DRIVEWAY
1830 SQFT
Dogwood
BRICK PATIO
228.76'
BBQ
N 57° 00' 00" E
Manhattan euonymous
2'-0"
Laurel
PROPOSED HOUSE
Ground cover
GC
CHAT
GATE
Ottoluken
Laurel
Geranium
Lilac Miss Kim
Jumiper
Viburnium
TRAMPOLINE
15' x 9'
Addition of row of 5
American hornbeam
trees min 2" diameter
GATE &
FENCE
Blue oat grass
Little bunny grass
Neptia and
Echinatia
CHAT
CHAT
N 44° 00' 00" W
67.25'
Addition of row of 7
American hornbeam
trees min 2" diameter

Keeping continuity between the front and backyard was an important aspect of the design. "I enclosed the front and backyard garden with similar elements so that they speak to each other, and so the soft and warm colors look fluid through the yard," Emily says.

COZY RETREAT

The landscape design holds a mixture of public and private spaces. The front porch and garden are visible from the street, a picket fence and gate adding a sense of delineation from the surroundings. The driveway leads to a hidden garage and an outdoor living space complete with comfy seating and a fireplace. "Here we have another farmhouse gate to keep animals in with a large wide lawn and potager vegetable garden," Emily says. At the north side of the home, Emily added another outdoor living space with a barbecue, smoker, bistro lights and dining area.

As with any design, the nature and limitations of the location greatly affected the project. In this landscape, the narrow shape of the lot as well as the busy street meant that Emily had to get creative. "Making extra parking was necessary," she says. "We spent a lot of time trying to hide neighbors' houses and make sure there were cozy living spaces with a touch of European cottage farmhouse charm."

Stay tuned—the full reveal of the stunning Project House Utah is coming in our next issue!

To learn more about EBW Landscape Design, visit **@ebwdesign** on Instagram and **ebwdesign.com**. And to learn more about The Fox Group, visit **@the_fox_group** on Instagram and thefoxgroup.com.

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PHOTO CREDIT: KIMBERLY MCCOLE

HOW TO STAY SANE AT CHRISTMAS

It's easy to get overwhelmed during this busy time. Let experienced mother of five Tamela Adams share her top tips for how to stay sane at Christmas in all the holiday madness.

BELIEVE
IN THE MAGIC OF
CHRISTMAS
MERRY
Christmas

PHOTO CREDIT: BRET GUM

CHRISTMAS ESSENTIAL OILS

There's no better time to ensure that you have a great-smelling home than when you're huddled indoors during the cold months around Christmastime.

PHOTO CREDIT: NATASHA HOLLAND

TIPS FOR PLANNING A CHRISTMAS PARTY

Being the host for a Christmas event is an opportunity to create an atmosphere and experience your loved ones won't forget. Learn how in this handy feature.

Merry Christmas

PHOTO CREDIT: BRET GUM

8 AMAZING CHRISTMAS COOKIE RECIPES

It's the perfect time to start thinking about all the food this holiday season. It's even better if you have these eight amazing Christmas cookie recipes up your sleeve, which are sure to be the hit at your next party!

PHOTO CREDIT: KINNA SHAFFER PHOTOGRAPHY

WHERE TO PLACE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE

Your Christmas tree is one of the most important pieces of your holiday décor. But first and foremost, you'll need to decide where to put your Christmas tree.

Follow us online on Instagram, Facebook and Pinterest for daily inspiration!

“Dining rooms often have hutches and cabinets...plan space for these extra items around your dining table.”

opposite | “Butler’s pantries (like this one) are used as additional food preparation space, storage space, coffee bars, or simple wine cellars.”

Beautiful Living

Find confidence in your interior design skills.

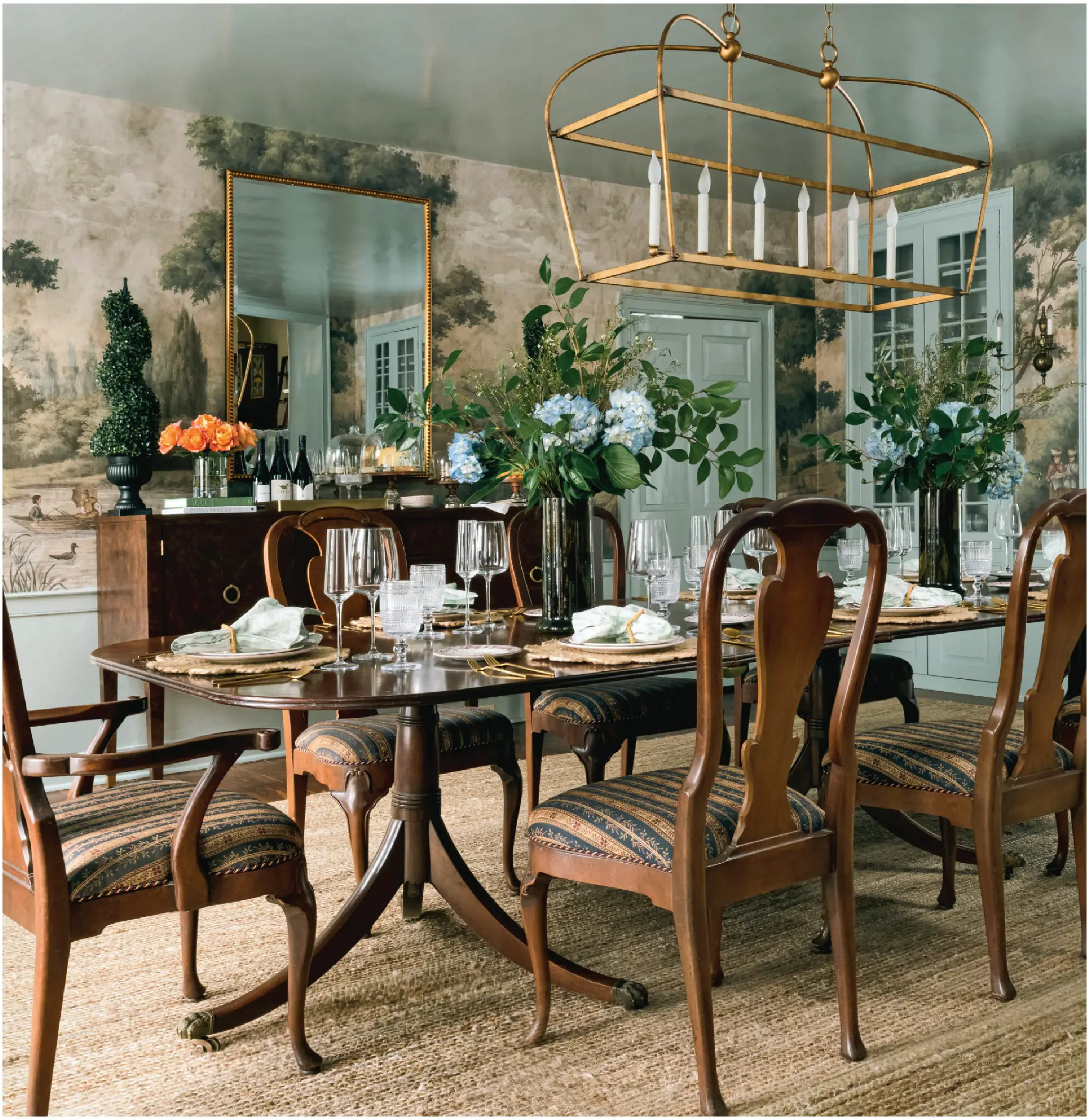
Written by **Perri Tobin**
Photographed by
Robert Radifera Photography

Imagine coming home to a space where every room feels masterfully curated, and every corner whispers elegance. Valerie Darden's *Beautiful Living* is not just a book; it's your new, ultimate guide to transforming your space into a sanctuary of style and comfort. With stunning visuals and easy-to-follow tips on upgrading to your dream home, Valerie's cheat guide is just what you need to effortlessly elevate your home's aesthetic. Whether you're a design novice or a seasoned interior enthusiast, each page turns inspiration into action, helping you craft a home that's not only beautiful but uniquely yours. Ready to learn more?

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

The following seven tools are essential for creating a harmonious living space: Balance ensures that visual weight is evenly distributed, creating a sense of stability. Unity brings cohesion, making sure all elements complement each other. Scale relates to the size of objects in relation with each other, ensuring proper proportions. Color sets the mood and ties a room together. Texture adds depth and interest, while pattern introduces rhythm, and emphasis draws attention to focal points, making spaces engaging and dynamic.

"This historic dining room is beautifully extravagant, with nature-themed wallpaper, a great chandelier, and both a fireplace and mantel."



“This colorful and expressive wallpaper is complemented by the bronze antique mirror and a uniquely intricate cream-colored dresser.”

> “You’d be surprised at how much you can do to a space to make it look more *elevated* and suit your style.”

Living Room *101*

Some of Valerie’s Frequently Asked Questions

A great place to start when decorating your home is, of course, the main living space, be it the living room or family room. Valerie is asked many common questions when it comes to the family room, and her answers to these FAQs offer insightful tips and some creative ideas for enhancing these spaces in your home. She provides practical advice on selecting furniture and arranging layouts to maximize both comfort and functionality. Beyond that, she also shares her expertise on incorporating personal and unique touches!

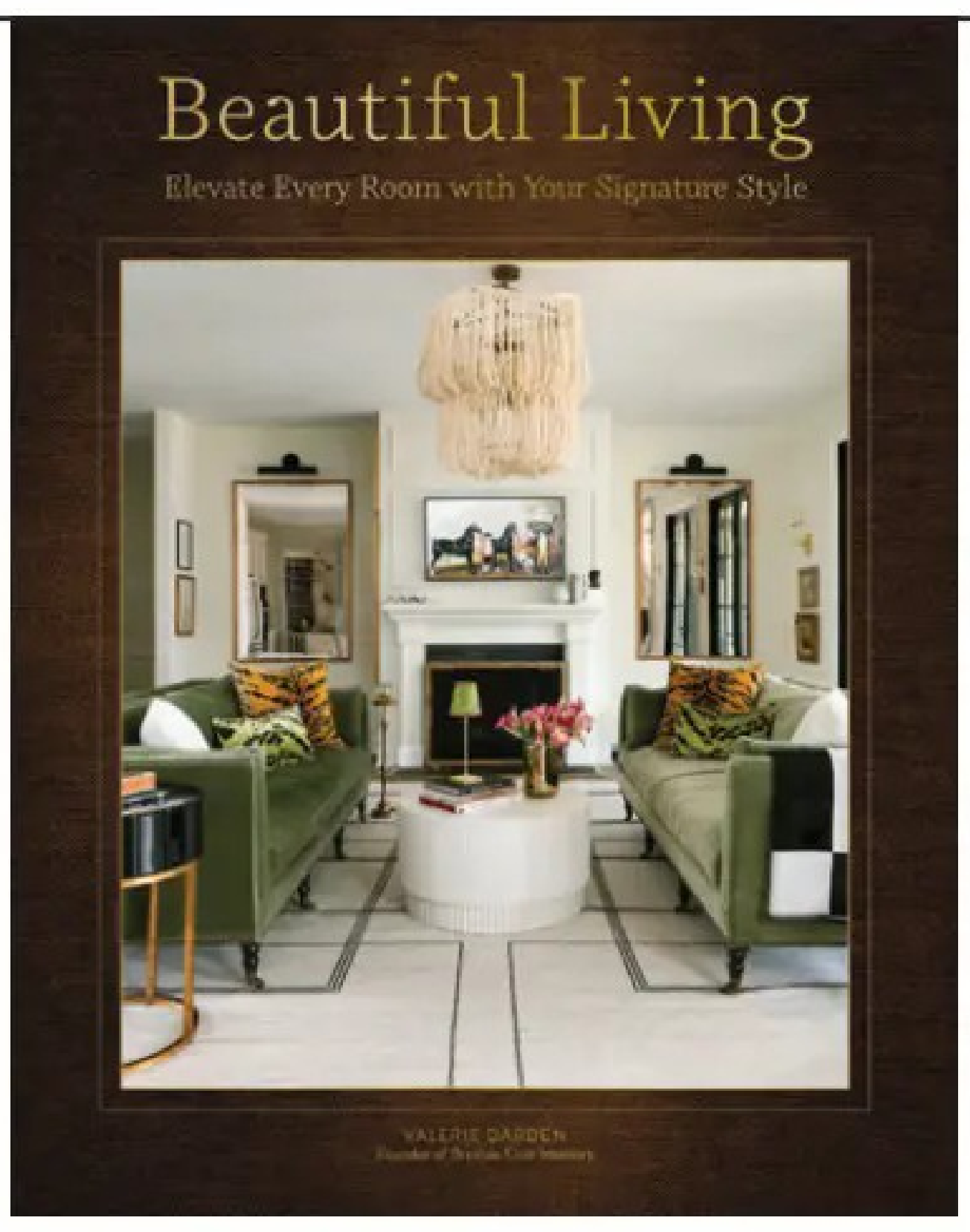
1. **Stuck on Storage.** Factoring in storage space in the main living space is a big one, especially if you have a large family and/or extended family. A coffee table with drawers or an ottoman with a lid are both great for storing things like toys and blankets. Storage baskets of various sizes are perfect for remote controls, throw pillows, batteries, candles, etc. Window seats are also a beautiful way to integrate some storage if you happen to have the space for one.
2. **What to Splurge On.** Living spaces tend to have a bit more wear and tear compared to other rooms in the home. Bearing this in mind, the item you would want to splurge on would be a well-made and durable sofa for the whole family. Go for a high-quality sofa for your budget and make sure to go for styles that will stand the test of time rather than trendy pieces.
3. **Concealing the TV.** If it’s within your budget, try a Samsung Frame TV which can disguise itself as classic art. Another option is placing your TV inside of an armoire or cabinet. The main benefit of an armoire is its traditional appearance and the extra bit of storage it provides!
4. **Sofa Size.** Do you want a large sofa, but are afraid it may take up too much space? Try taking the measurements of the sofa, then place easy-to-remove masking tape down to get a visual of how large the sofa will be in your space. Don't forget to consider space for end tables! A lot of small pieces can sometimes result in a disorganized and cluttered room, so don’t be scared to go big with pieces like a sofa.

above, left | "The best colors that make you feel calm are often mellow tones such as creamy whites, soothing blues and earthy greens."

below, left | "In a modern style, the wallpaper and countertop are white with contrasting black accents sprinkled around that still allows for a bright space."

MASTERING THEME AND FLOW

You want your home to feel cohesive yet also radiate your family's style, and having a coordinated flow throughout your entire home is the key! Flooring serves as the foundation, providing a backdrop for other design choices. Hardware and fixture choices add subtle yet impactful details. Wallpaper with fun patterns can enrich the visual interest of a space. Cabinetry and countertops both need to harmonize with the overall theme, while lighting sets the mood and can highlight key features in each room.



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Willow Bath and Vanity

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Mullican Flooring was founded in 1985 along the banks of the Greenbrier River in Ronceverte, West Virginia. Bill Mullican produced beautifully crafted hardwood floors from prime local timber and established Mullican Flooring as the premier brand of hardwood flooring. That tradition of legendary craftsmanship continues today. Visit **mullicanflooring.com**.

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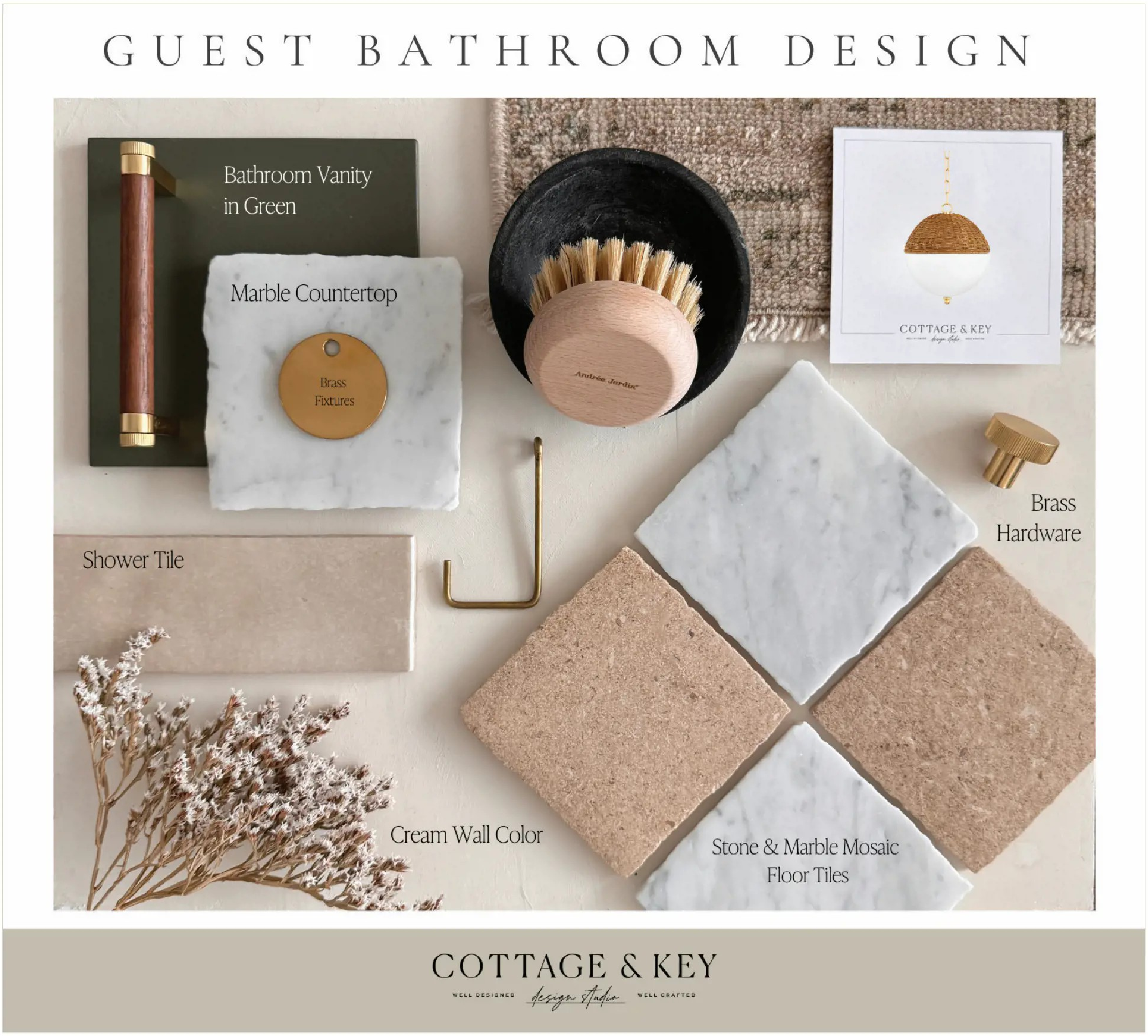
The Steves family's commitment to quality has earned them their strong reputation among homeowners and builders. Established in San Antonio, Texas over 150 years ago, Steves & Sons is now an industry leader of manufacturing interior and exterior doors. Still a family business today, they are committed to craftsmanship and style while building on the tradition of environmental respect and responsibility. Visit **stevesdoors.com**.

BACKGROUND PHOTO CREDIT: BY LUKULO/ADOBE STOCK

Timeless Charm

With a beautiful blend of functional features and a cozy yet sophisticated look and feel, the pantry and guest bathroom of our Project House Austin shine with an array of textures and a touch of European style.

Written by **Laura Shimko**
Photography courtesy of **Cottage & Key**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Choosing materials can be difficult, especially in more functional areas of the home. “The challenge is to create two bathrooms that are complementary in style while also being unique spaces,” Melissa says. “I try to use similar materials while bringing a unique twist to each space, such as the layout of tiles.”

Often overlooked, the smaller yet hardworking areas of a home are the perfect opportunity to elevate the overall design of the home. For Melissa and Brent of Cottage & Key, the guest bathroom and pantry provide the perfect opportunity to craft functional features while keeping a sense of cohesion with the rest of the house. The result is two spaces with a beautiful blend of timeless English cottage charm and a cozy modern vibe.

GORGEOUS IN GREEN

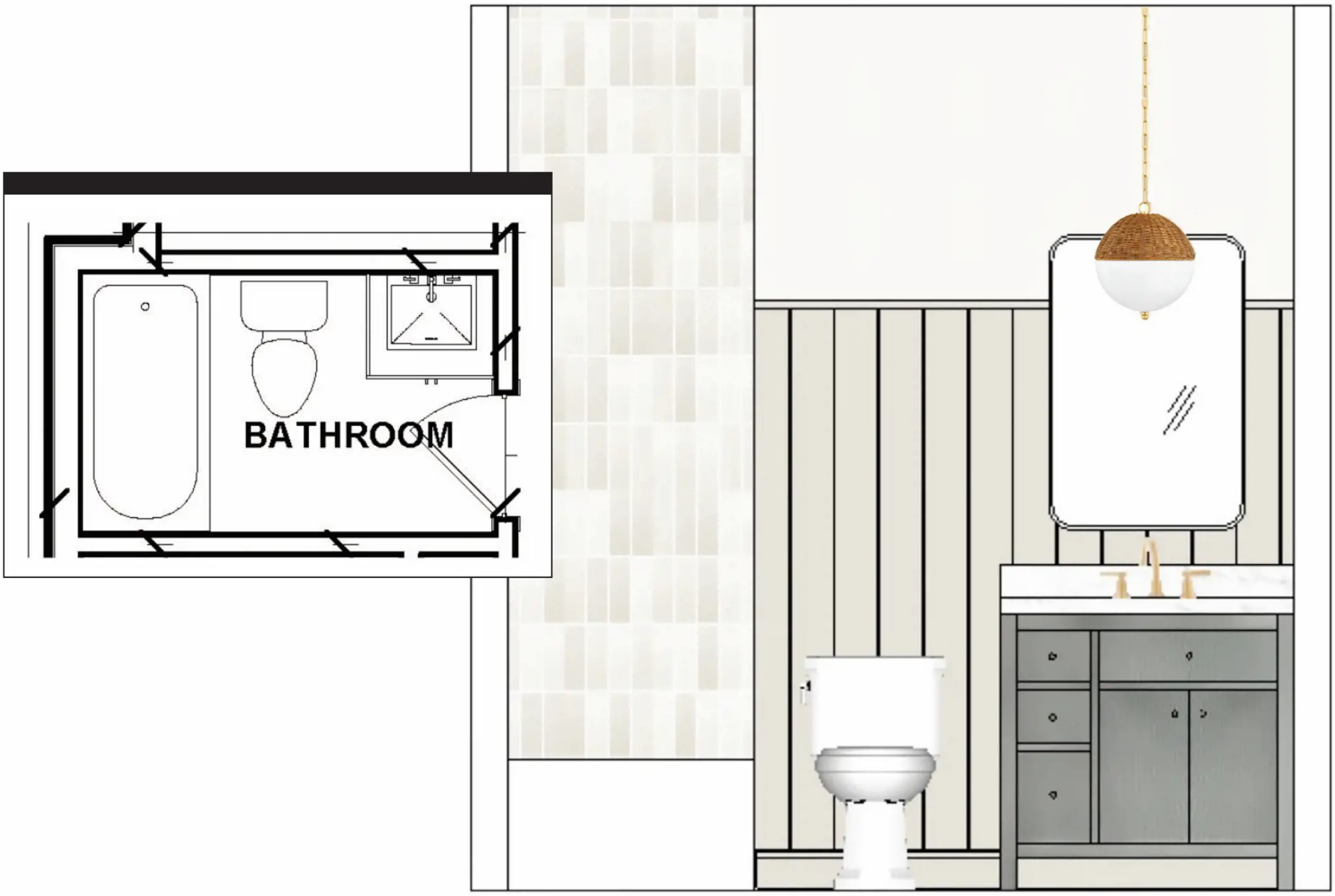
In the guest bathroom, Melissa's combination of an updated and traditional look has another opportunity to shine. "I want to create a transitional space that combines traditional charm with some modern trends while also staying true to the cottage look and feel," she says. At 9 x 6 feet, this guest bathroom will include a shower. "When designing an overall floor layout, I like to make sure that the bathrooms are just the right size to be functional while not taking up too much space from the other rooms," Melissa says. She selected a 36-inch vanity that provides storage while leaving space for other features.

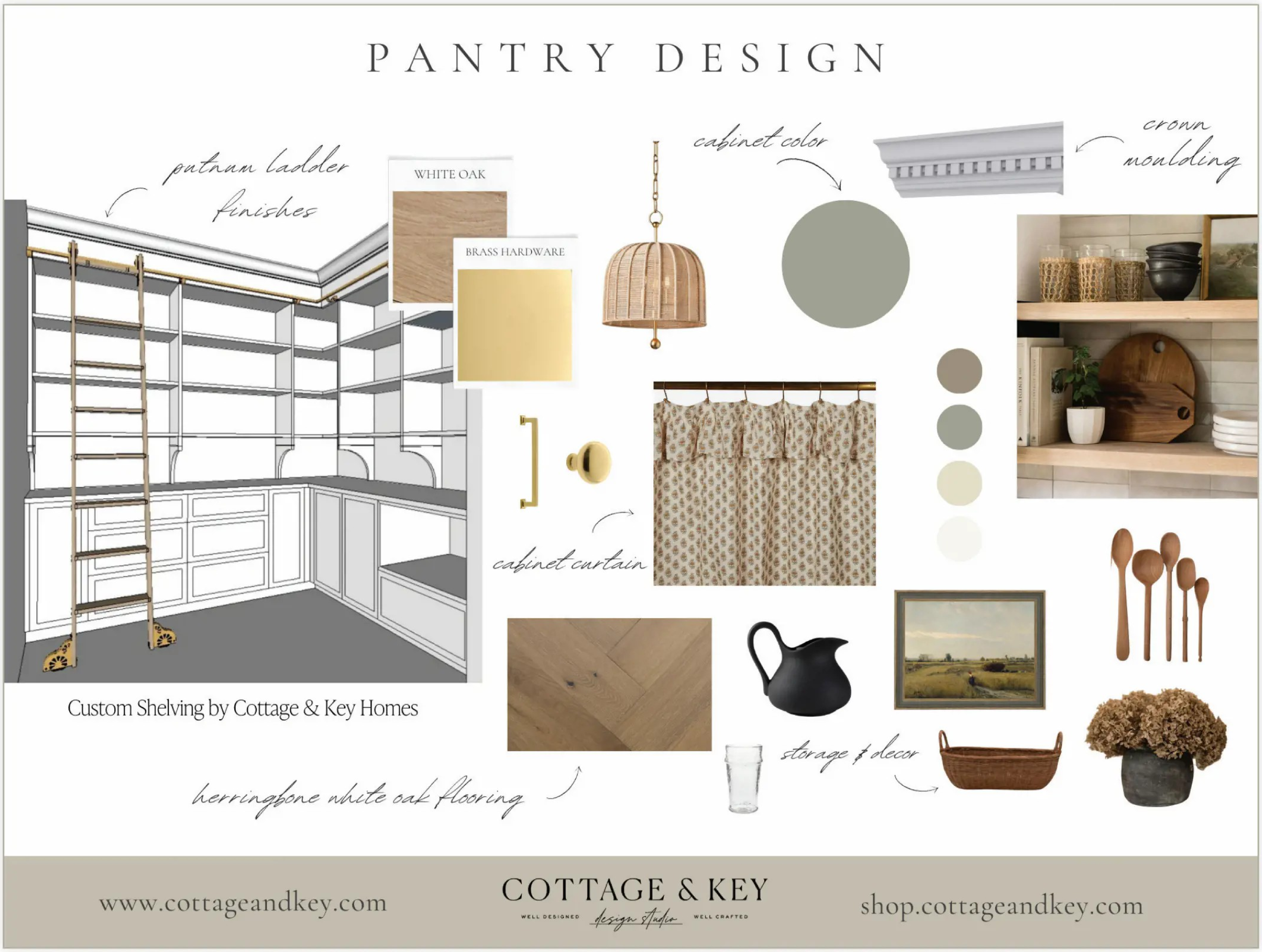
As with the rest of the home, the material selections for this space keep to a neutral palette with a variety of textures. "This bathroom pulls from some of the traditional materials, such as natural stone, that will be found throughout the house, while pulling in some unique color tones and textures," Melissa says.

The rich green color for the vanity is a striking choice. Melissa elaborates, "One of the first pieces I chose for this space is a gorgeous green vanity by Willow Bath & Vanity. That gave me the pop of color I wanted to build from by incorporating some natural stone elements in the vanity countertop and tiles and brass hardware to add warmth from some of those cooler tones," she says. "A guest bath is a great place to play a little with color."

DELIGHTFUL DETAILS

Nearly an 8 x 8 foot cube, the pantry is an open concept with a walkway dividing it from the breakfast nook and is tucked away behind the kitchen wall. "Since this is a small cottage house, we had to get creative with defining spaces," Melissa says. Even with a compact layout, the pantry is more

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One of the most important aspects of home design is ensuring a cohesive look throughout the entire home. Melissa's repeated use of certain elements is intentional. "Some of the textures in this space such as the rattan light, brass fixtures, and varying wood tones can be found in many other instances throughout the house to tie the rooms together," she says.

spacious than in a typical cottage home—and every bit of it is carefully planned to make the best use of storage space. "We maximized the use of the 9-foot ceilings and created storage drawers below, and lined two walls with upper shelves featuring a ladder that can move to either side and provide easy access to higher shelves," Melissa says. Partnering with Putnam Ladder, Melissa opted for a white oak and brass ladder that beautifully brings together functionality and style. "The quality and detailing are amazing, and it will really elevate the pantry," she says.

As for the material selections, Melissa continues a rich mixture of textures, neutral tones and colors that provide a calm and classic look and feel, while punctuating with pops of color and patterns. The herringbone white oak flooring from Mullican Hardwood Flooring provides continuity with the rest of the home. "One of the design features I'm excited about is incorporating café curtains into the space, which is a traditional detail that has been trending this year," she says. "And choosing a fun, traditional pattern like a small paisley design gives the space some personality and visual interest."

To learn more about Cottage & Key, visit their Instagram page **@cottageandkey** and their website at **cottageandkey.com**.

SOURCES

AN ELEGANT CELEBRATION

Page 16

Entrance Hall:
Chandelier: Visual Comfort, visualcomfort.com.
Table lamp: Arteriors, arteriorshome.com.
Wallpaper mural: Paradiso Grisaille via Mural Source, themuralsource.com.
Upholstery on black lacquer settee: Lee Jofa fabric, kravet.com.
Rug runners: Stark Carpet, starkcarpet.com.
Stone fireplace: Material Works, materialworks.com.
Living Room:
Upholstery on club chairs: Schumacher Grisaille chintz with tape from Samual & Sons, Schumacher.com.
Buillon fringe on sofas: Cowtan & Tout, cowtan.com.
Upholstery on sofas: Kravet fabric, kravet,com.
Pillows: JAB green velvet throw, jabelladesigns.com.
Ottoman upholstery: Clarence House Mandarain fabric, clarencehouse.com.
Upholstery on green wingback chairs: Pierre Frey Beaucaire fabric, pierrefrey.com.
Upholstery on Chippendale chairs: Schumacher flame stitch, kravet.com.
Dining Room:
Mastercraft chairs covered in Kravet fabric
Chairs: Mastercraft, mastercraftincorporated.com; upholstery Kravet fabric, kravet.com.
Wallpaper: Stark Mayflower, burkedecor.com.
Dining table: antique
Sideboard: from Alex Cooper Auctions, alexcooper.com.
Kitchen:
Island and backsplash: Calacatta Gold marble from Triton Stone, tritonstone.com.
Countertops: Zinc countertops in bronze from Le Bastille, labastiile.com.
Cabinets: Wood Mode cabinets via Classic Cupboards, classiccupboards.com.
Faucets: Nickel faucets, newportbrass.com.
Hardware: combination of mixed metals from WaterStreet Brass Hardware, waterstreetbrass.com.
Stainless steel appliances: Thermador, thermador.com.
Hood: Vent-A-Hood brass & stainless hood, ventahood.com.
Counter stools: Ebony, brass, and cane from Alfonso Marina, alfonsomarina.com; cushions covered in Kravet fabric, kravet.com.
Lanterns: Oversized Riverside brass lanterns from Visual Comfort, visualcomfort.com.
Dining table: Baker Vendome, bakerfurniture.com.
Chair upholstery: Cowtan & Tout, cowtan.co and Greenhouse fabrics, greenhousefabrics.com; Bird prints from Celadon Art, celedonart.com.
Family Room:
Stone fireplace: Material Works, materialworks.com.
Sofas: Baker Bespoke Sofas covered in Schumacher Performance fabric, bakerfurniture.com.
Chairs: Holly Hunt chairs covered in Zimmer & Rohde fabric, hollyhunt.com.
Coffee table: Kravet in Kravet fabric, kravet.com.
Throw pillows: Cowtan & Tout cowtan.com and Lee Jofa kravet.com.
Lighting: Chandelier, sconces and table/standing lamps are Visual Comfort, visualcomfort.com.
End tables: Alfonso Marina, alfonsomarina.com.
Carpet: Woven leather carpet, Stark, stark.com.
Doors: Kolbe, kolbewindows.com.

A WINNING, FESTIVE TABLESCAPE

Page 86

Red fringed napkins: Ayuzawa Handmade Napkins, Amazon, amazon.com.
Twig charger plates: Antique Farm House, antiquefarmhouse.com.
Berglander gold flatware: Amazon, amazon.com.
BHG Scalloped Porcelain Dinnerware Set: Walmart, walmart.com.
Glasses: BACLIFE Blown Crystal Champagne Glasses, Amazon, amazon.com.
Gold Bells: Maydahui vintage jingle bell, Amazon, amazon.com.
Garland: The Original Afloral Real Touch Norfolk Pine Garland, Amazon, amazon.com.
Red Berry Stems: Whaline Christmas Artificial Berry Picks, Amazon, amazon.com.

DECORATING WITH CARE

Page 58

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Garlands: Antique Farmhouse, antiquefarmhouse.com.
Garlands: Journey Décor, journeydecor.com.
Have Yourself a Very Merry Christmas sign: Our Found Home, ourfoundhome.com.
Holiday home tours sign: Olive Branch Farmhouse, etsy.com/shop/olivebranchfarmhouse.
Living room rug: Boutique Rugs, boutiquerugs.com.
Living room furniture: Sherrill Furniture, sherrillfurniture.com.
Sleigh rides sign: Toe Fish Art, toefishart.com.
Velvet ribbon: Hobby Lobby, hobbylobby.com.
Wallpaper: Wallpaper Direct, wallpaperdirect.com.

AD INDEX

Amana Woolen Mill
amanawoolenmill.com 10, 13

Asheford Institute of Antiques
asheford.com...112

Board & Brush Creative Studio
boardandbrush.com/studio-locations ....
.... 15

Circle 21 Candles
circle21candles.com 14

Emerson Creek Pottery
emersoncreekpottery.com......................... 15

Hoselink
hoselink.com 12

Montana Rustic Accents
montanarusticaccents.com..... Inside cover

Moss Creek
mosscreek.net............................. Back cover

Name Stories LLC/co Partner Centric
namestories.com 14

Putnam Rolling Ladder
putnamrollingladder.com..........................113

Woodwaves
woodwaves.com... 23

Words with Boards
wordswithboards.com.................................14

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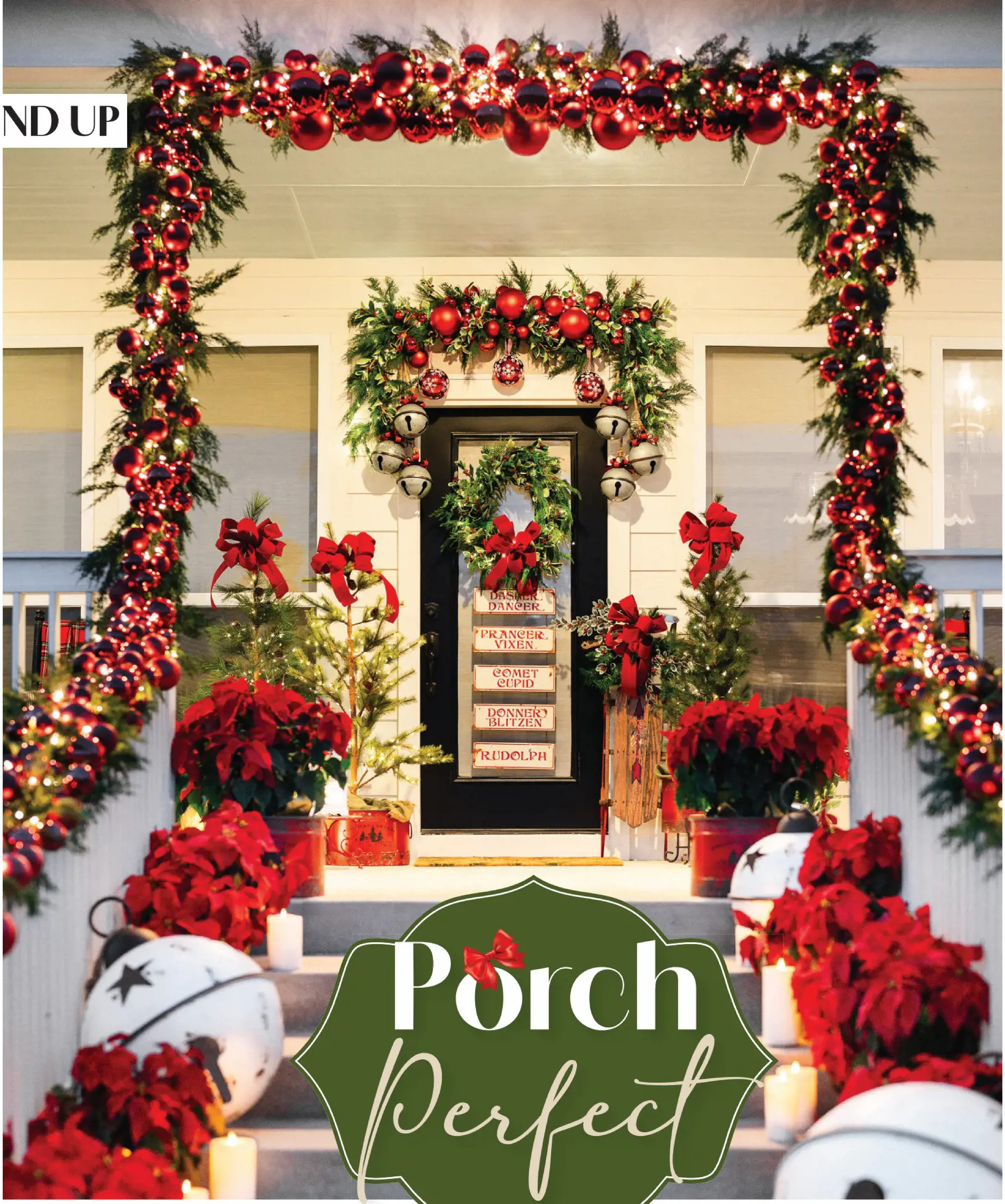

Porch Perfect

Create this stunning porch entry to wow your holiday guests.

Written, styled and photographed by **Rhonda Kaiser**

Creating your own custom holiday porch is easier than you might think! It just takes a bit of planning, but it is so worth the effort.

Curious how I installed the garland on the porch entryway without anything to attach it to? This DIY is incredibly simple—it just requires a little time.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 ¼" PVC pipe and 2 elbows
- Clear zip ties
- Garland
- Ornaments
- Lights

WHAT YOU'LL DO:

1. Secure 1 1/4" PVC pipes to each side of your porch columns using zip ties, and connect the top of the PVC frame with elbows on both sides.
2. Use zip ties to attach the garland and lights to the PVC frame.
3. Add ornaments—yes, with more zip ties!

PRO TIPS:

- Fluff each garland stem to enhance its volume.
- Concentrate heavier clusters of ornaments in the center to create a focal point.

To complete the porch, I added a few ornaments in a cascading arrangement above the doorway and placed a vintage sled for a striking focal point. I used peppermint striped ribbons to attach these ornaments for an extra touch of holiday cheer. A simple wreath and a few faux trees flank the door. Finally, I placed flameless, flickering outdoor candles on the stairs, accompanied by live poinsettias and oversized metal jingle bells.

Follow along with Rhonda online at **southernhomeandfarm.com** and on Instagram **@southernhomeandfarm**.

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